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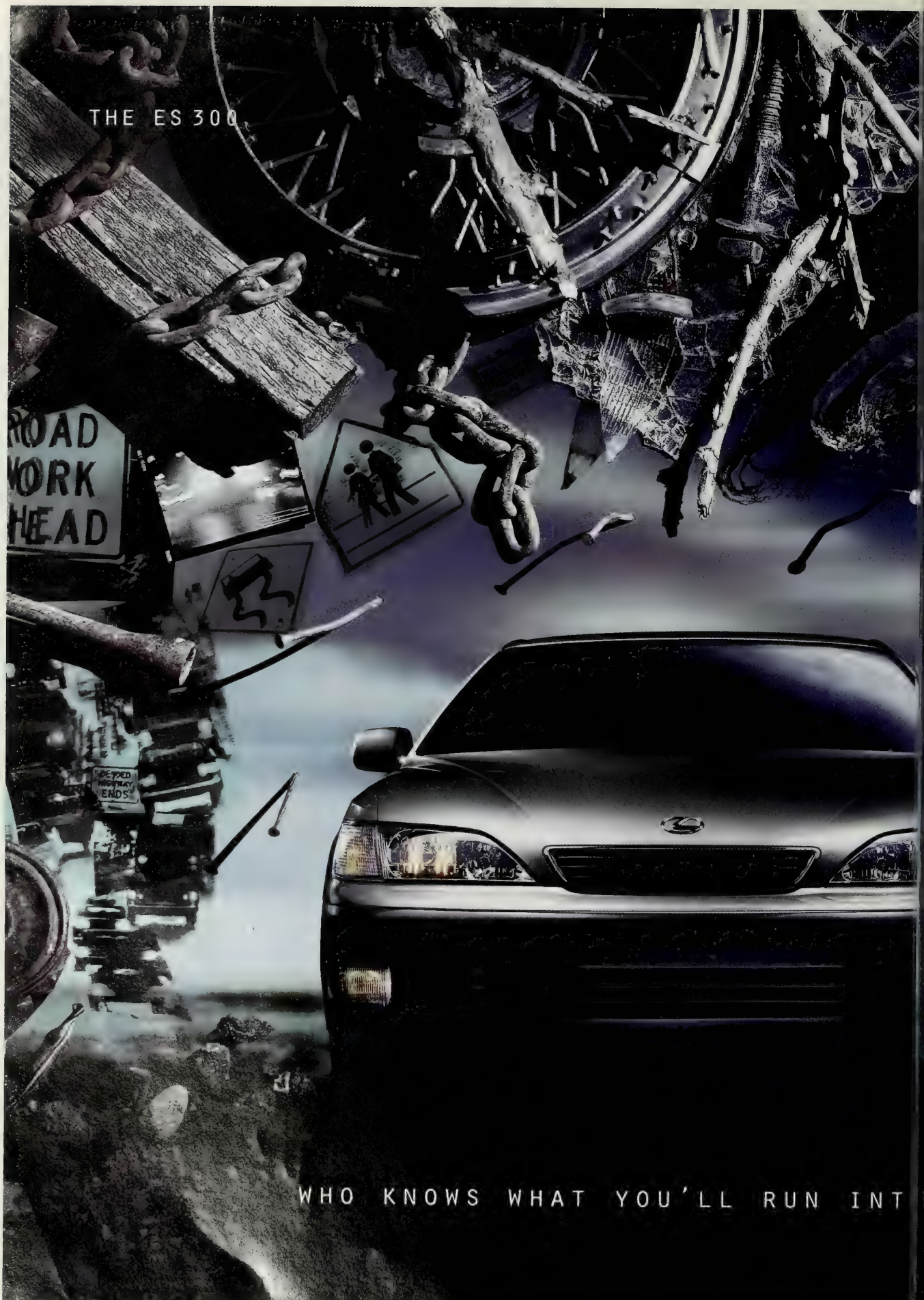
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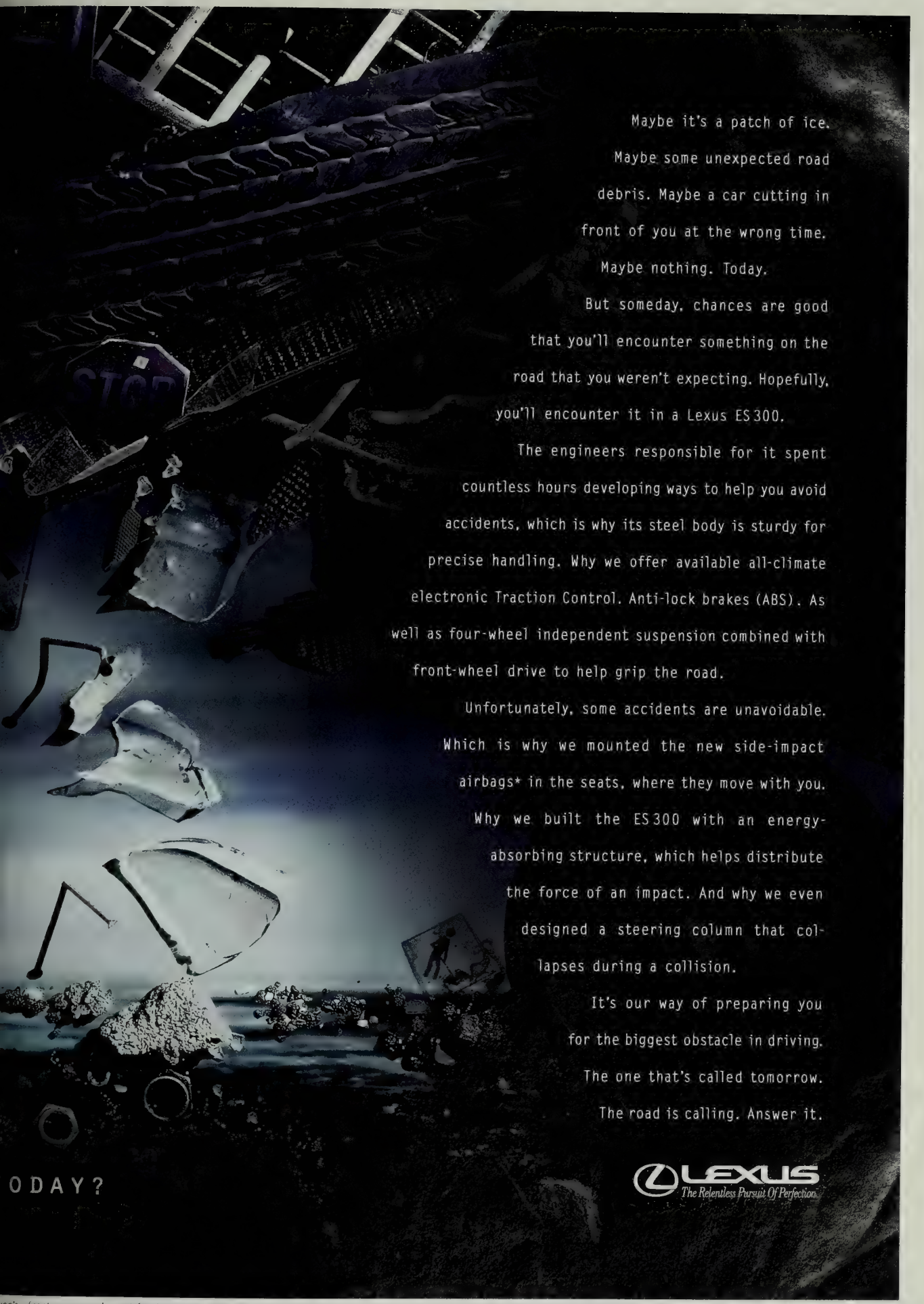
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JANUARY 1998 No 449

Features

LEONARDO TAKES WING | 70

At 23, Leonardo DiCaprio found himself at the center of the most expensive movie ever made, James Cameron's magnificent *Titanic,* a logistical nightmare of gigantic cranes, bungee cords, and water tanks the size of city blocks. As the $200 million high-tech epic hits the screen, Cathy Horyn explores why its international heartthrob star is still happiest at home. Photographs by Annie Leibovitz.

HEARTS ON FIRE | 76

In an excerpt from his long-awaited second book on the civil-rights movement, *Pillar of Fire,* Taylor Branch examines the extraordinary personal dramas behind the passage of the landmark Civil Rights Act—J. Edgar Hoover's machinations, the bullying idealism of Lyndon Johnson, and the courageous, tortured leadership of Martin Luther King Jr.

PARIS MATCH | 86

Gendarmes with guns, horn-blowing heralds, and 1,200 jet-set guests all took part in the three-day, $1.7 million wedding of Prince and Duke Pierre d'Arenberg and Silvia de Castellane. Along with the New York Concorde pack and a platoon of European royalty, Bob Colacello ran the mad social marathon from Versailles to Paris to Bourges. Photographs by Jonathan Becker.

FRAN LEBOWITZ ON AGE | 94

The young are different from you and me because they have no money. Why, then, asks the noted humorist, does everyone want to be 23?

DEVIL IN A BESPOKE SUIT | 96

Legendary for his impeccable tailoring, wicked wit, and club-hopping stamina, 74-year-old Ahmet Ertegun has made Atlantic Records the industry's top label, signing artists such as Aretha Franklin, Led Zeppelin, and the Rolling Stones. As Ertegun's rock 'n' roll empire turns 50, Leslie Bennetts lends an ear to the man behind the music, his elegant wife, Mica, and friends including Henry Kissinger and Mick Jagger. Photographs by Annie Leibovitz.

MYSTERY TRAIN | 104

As the Musée d'Orsay sends forth a new exhibition, "Manet, Monet, and the Gare Saint-Lazare," Laura Jacobs spotlights the masterpiece that inspired it.

TRUE COLORS | 106

Annie Leibovitz and Dee Dee Myers take an inside look at the cast of Mike Nichols' *Primary Colors,* based on Joe Klein's controversial *roman à clef* about a couple not unlike Bill and Hillary Clinton.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 1



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VANITY FAIR

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A PERFECT STAR | 112

A year and a half after the death of the legendary Claudette Colbert, at 92, Amy Fine Collins uncovers the personal drama of Hollywood's most private actress—the fear behind the impeccable makeup; the passion for Clark Gable, her co-star in *It Happened One Night;* and the iron will she displayed by exiting the screen at the perfect moment.

Columns

SCENES FROM AN EXECUTION | 30

Friendly prison officials, coffee and doughnuts, and three quick injections have turned capital punishment into an antiseptic "procedure." But watching Samuel Lee McDonald be killed, Christopher Hitchens saw the evil beneath the banality.

CNN'S BIG NEWS BEAR | 46

After 18 years of producing ABC's top news shows and boosting stars such as Diane Sawyer and Ted Koppel, Rick Kaplan is poised to remake CNN's domestic operation—if his relationship with Bill Clinton doesn't get in the way. David Margolick reports. Portrait by Danny Turner.

HALL OF FAME | 62

Osborn Elliott nominates activist Episcopalian bishop Paul Moore, whose memoir illuminates a life devoted to the poor and the oppressed. Portrait by Gasper Tringale.

Vanities

LA FEMME NATASHA | 65

Brian Stokes Mitchell sings *Ragtime; V.F.* Camera: night falls on Manhattan.

Et Cetera

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page 196, *Fodor's Gold Guide Florida '98*

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The Hundred-Year War



Although Taylor Branch is indisputably a son of the South, he grew up largely removed from the battlefields of the civil-rights movement. He was raised in the comfortable, all-white Atlanta neighborhood of Buckhead, at that time a model of Rockwellian, 1950s complacency and rectitude. His mother, Jane, opposed segregation on religious grounds. His father, Frank, who owned a dry-cleaning business, viewed it as "a rainstorm—something you endure."

In the 1960s, though, as crosses burned across Mississippi and police turned fire hoses on protesters in Alabama, the race war became something considerably more personal. In 1965, Klansmen in nearby Forsyth County, a racist stronghold, vowed that blacks would never live there. Without telling his family, Branch's father, then 43, joined a group of black and white protesters who set out to spend a night in the county. The Klansmen waved weapons and shouted threats. The black protesters considered the incident routine, but Frank Branch was shaken by the experience. Taylor, an 18-year-old freshman at the University of North Carolina, was overwhelmed by his father's quiet heroics. The civil-rights movement would become the defining period in Branch's life.

After working as a staff writer for *The Washington Monthly* and *Harper's,* Branch spent six years reporting and crafting *Parting the Waters,* his masterly account of the rise of Martin Luther King Jr. and the formative years of the civil-rights movement. The book, published in 1988, won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award.

Just as King's early years laid the groun work for greater triumphs, *Parting the Wate* is to be followed next month by Branch's lor awaited second volume, *Pillar of Fire,* whi took nine years to complete. (Both books we edited by Simon & Schuster's Alice Mayhe who has championed the project for more th 15 years.) *Pillar of Fire* (an excerpt of whi appears on page 76) covers the brief but cruc period between the assassination of Preside John F. Kennedy in 1963 and the historic S ma marches in 1965. "Taylor put his heart a soul into this project," says another southern Bill Clinton, who is a great admirer of Branch work. "When you read his account of the Ki era, you know that he not only knows wh happened, he feels its deepest meaning, as pe haps only a southerner could. We are fortuna that he worked so hard, wrote so well, cared so much."

Last summer in Elk Creek, Virginia, a 40-year-old black ma named Garnett P. Johnson was doused with gasoline and burne alive, allegedly by two white men. The incident occurred just the South was beginning to recover from a horrifying wave church burnings; at least 126 black churches have been attacke since 1995, evoking the darkest moments of the civil-rights era. Mississippi, 46 percent of blacks still live below the poverty lin Three decades after the momentous events chronicled i Branch's *Pillar of Fire,* everything has changed, and nothing ha

Graydon Carter

Field of Dreams



ON THE COVER
Annie Leibovitz photographs Leonardo DiCaprio, surrounded by the crew of the Twin Ranch, Lebec, California. He wears a shirt by Prada, jacket by Ogon, and pants by Paul Smith. Grooming by Eric Barnard; grooming products from Chaiqua Skin Supplies for Men. Styled by Nicoletta Santoro.


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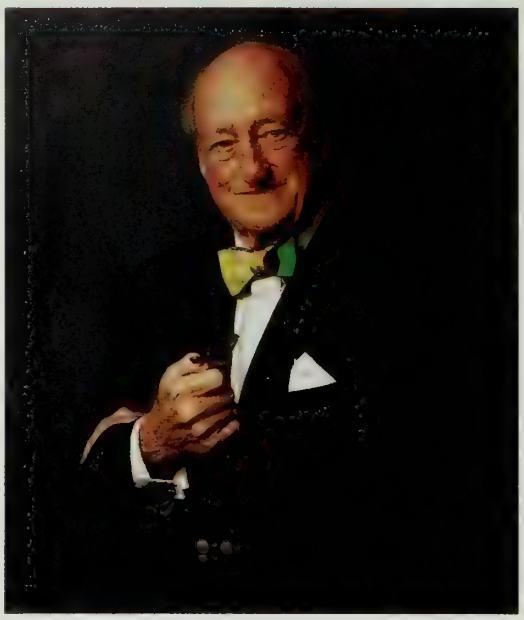
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GASPER TRINCALE

Osborn Elliott has been friends with Bishop Paul Moore since the 1970s, when Elliott was editor in chief of *Newsweek.* This month Elliott nominates Moore for the *V.F.* Hall of Fame, in part because the bishop helped him organize a march on behalf of Elliott's Citizens Committee for New York City, which supports 11,000 community groups. Today the two spend time fishing together in Stonington, Connecticut, where Moore keeps his boat at Elliott's dock. "On rare occasions," Elliott says, "we catch a fish."



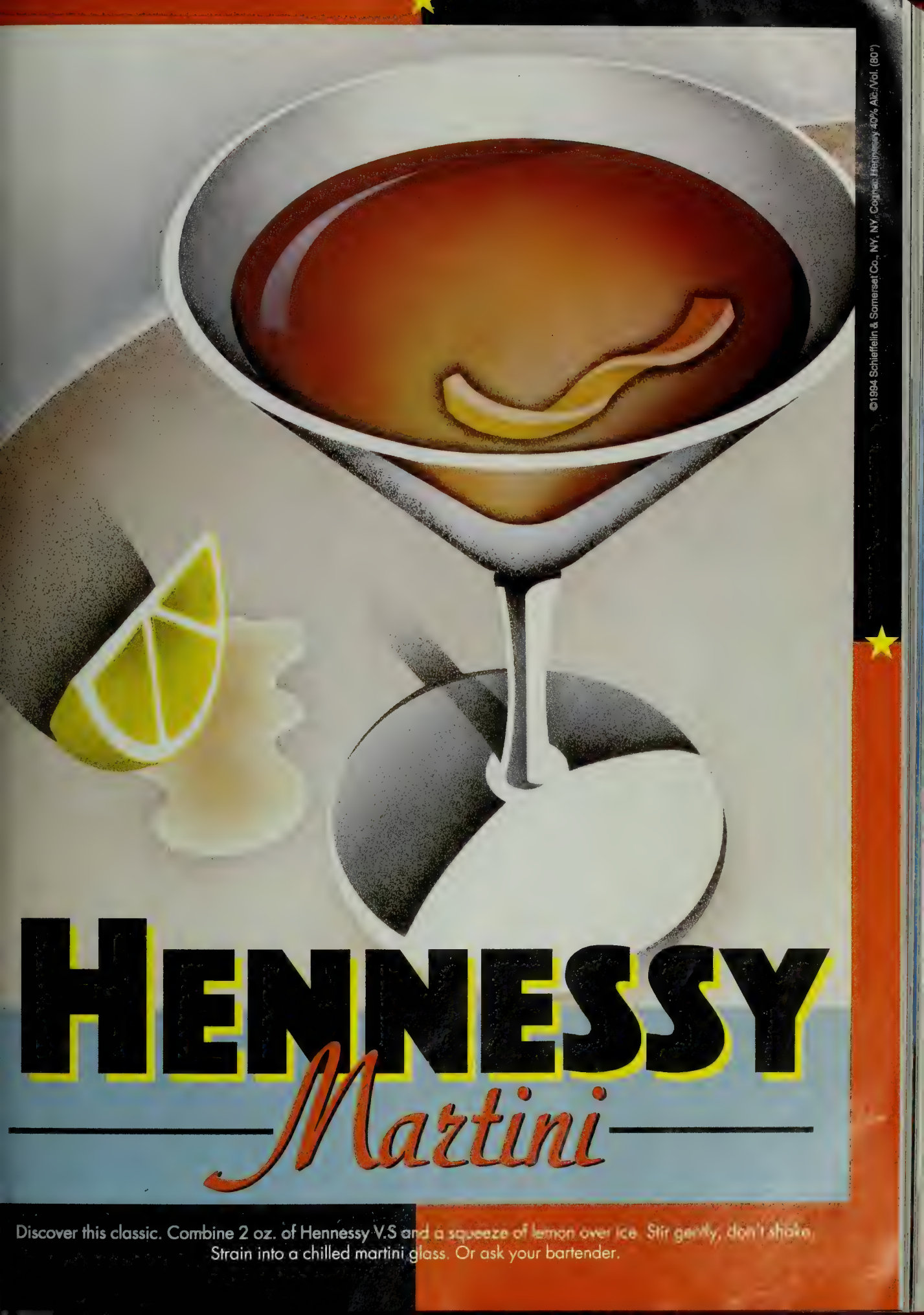
JESSE FROHMAN

"Hanging out with Ahmet Ertegun doesn't feel at all like work," says contributing editor **Leslie Bennetts,** whose profile of the Atlantic Records co-C.E.O. begins on page 96. "Whether he's going to a rock concert, an A-list dinner, or a black-tie gala, he has more fun than most people who are half his age." Part of Bennetts's interview took place backstage at a Rolling Stones concert in New Jersey, where Mick Jagger and Keith Richards treated Ertegun like a brother. "To the baby-boomers who are afraid they're too old for sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll," she says, "Ahmet is a great inspiration."



PERRY THORSVIK

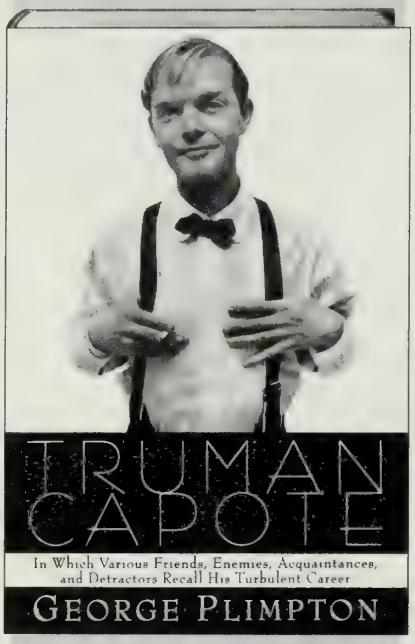
Taylor Branch's 1988 book on the civil-rights movement, *Parting the Waters,* won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award. The book's sequel, *Pillar of Fire,* will be published next month by Simon & Schuster—and is excerpted in this issue. Branch, who has written for *The Washington Monthly, Harper's,* and *Esquire,* lives in Baltimore with his wife and two children. CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22



"It's been a crash course in Old Hollywood," says special correspondent **Amy Fine Collins** (right, with daughter) of her story on screen legend Claudette Colbert (page 112). The former art historian, who wrote about Hedda Hopper and Louella Parsons last April, has read countless Hollywood biographies, watched hundreds of vintage movies, and is now something of an expert on the subject. "So many of the current Hollywood players don't know a thing about their history," she says. "As for the ones who do, they don't know much about anything else."



NINA BRAMHALL

After attending Santa Clara University in her native California, contributing editor **Dee Dee Myers** headed straight to "the graduate school of the trenches"—Walter Mondale's 1984 presidential campaign. She rose through the ranks to become Mondale's assistant press secretary for California. "It was a political disaste she says of the ill-fated campaign, "but a good experience." Myers, who later served as President Clinton's first press secretary—and the first female presidential press secretary ever—lives in Los Angeles with her husband, Todd Purdum, Los Angeles–bureau chief of *The New York Times*.



Special correspondent **Bob Colacello** saw a lot of familiar faces while covering the d'Arenberg wedding for this issue—specifically, people he has written about in *Vanity Fair*. At the dinner, Colacello (right, with fellow guest Lucy Ferry) sat beside Barbara de Kwiatkowski, whom he profiled in 1992; he rode to Bourges with Cornelia Guest, whom he wrote about in 1988; and at the wedding reception he shared dessert with São Schlumberger, the subject of a 1993 article.

DAVID YURMAN



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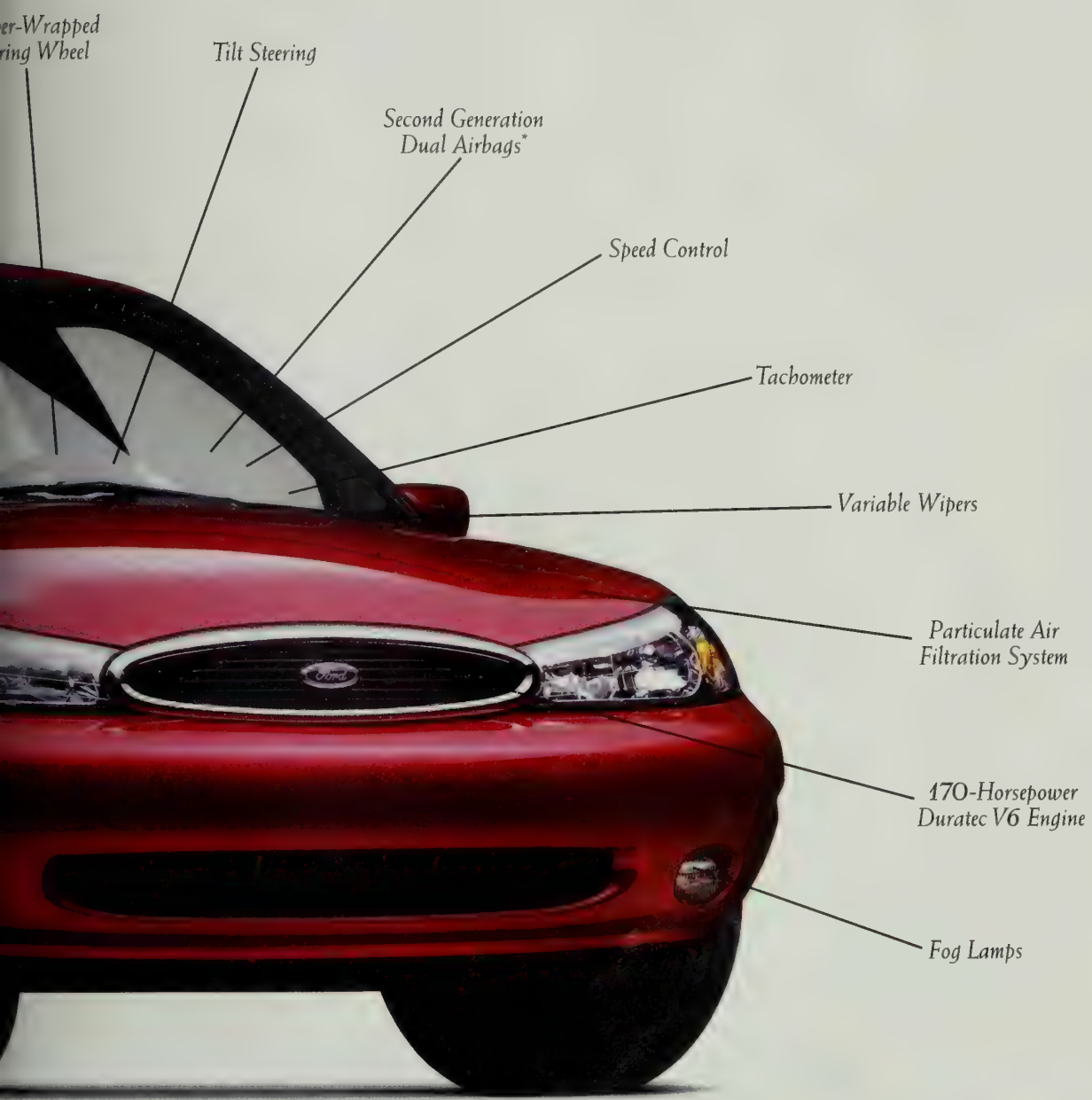
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THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GORE

Gore Vidal's essay "The Last Empire" [November] is the single most powerful analysis of "world power" I have seen in decades. I never believed that the truths described by Vidal would ever appear in a mass-circulation American publication. How many readers will see that it all began with the "near great" President Truman, whose legacy (well described by Vidal) includes destruction of: our Constitution with a "loyalty program," our national conscience with atom bombs, Truman's political party with undeclared war, the world's economies with a Cold War, and populism worldwide with a secret police?

MILTON ARONSON
Saint Petersburg Beach, Florida

I RELISHED Gore Vidal's delightful wit and juicy sarcasm in "The Last Empire." I only wish that the essay were, in fact, satire; instead, it was a very penetrating and realistic look at America.

DONALD A. BROWN
Fairfax, Virginia

VIDAL SAYS HE HOLDS the West responsible for starting the Cold War because we "betrayed" Stalin, reneging on our agreements on reparations and the handling of German lands.

Never mind that Stalin had already occupied Eastern Europe; that he was personally responsible for more deaths than any other single individual in history; that he had regularly betrayed those closest to him, including his own son, not to mention leaders of other nations; and that under his rule the Soviet Union was unimaginably oppressive. Considering just these well-worn facts, was there anyone less worthy of negotiating with than Stalin? Does it take much interpretative skill to look to Stalin first and the Soviet state second for the cause of the Cold War?

ALAN MORRISON
Santa Clara, California

BY ALL MEANS, let us encourage a worldwide system of city-states and ethnic and religious tribalism as a substitute for American-style democracy. After all, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, and the Balkans are all much better role models for the peoples of the world to emulate than that terrible old American empire.

TOM BOECHE
Nebraska City, Nebraska

YOUR "Portrait of World Power" not only is a superb collection of photographs but contains amazing glimpses of where the world's great wealth is. It also has moments of humor. The pages are great fun!

CHARLOTTE M. CARDON
Tucson, Arizona

IN THE PROFILE of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu *Vanity Fair* states that his "hard-line stance" led to terrorism against Israelis in early 1996. But that carnage in Jerusalem, Ashkelon, and Tel Aviv occurred under Labor's conciliatory Prime Minister Shimon Peres, months before Netanyahu's election.

Likewise, the reference to "four days of conflict" that "left 73 Israelis dead" in "fall 1996" is unintelligible. The September opening of a new door to a tourist tunnel in Jerusalem became a pretext for Yasser Arafat to incite riots, claiming the new exit threatened the well-being of Muslim shrines. The charge was manifestly false—the sites are fine—but dozens of Palestinians and Israelis died in the rioting.

While Netanyahu was wrongly blamed for causing bloodshed, Arafat's terrorist career was erased. Instead, *Vanity Fair* reported his favorite cartoons!

ANDREA LEVIN
Executive director
CAMERA, Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America
Boston, Massachusetts

I AM THE OLDEST of Gerald Levin's *five* children, one of *three* from his first marriage, to my mom, Carol. In your bio of my dad, you effectively erased the life of an important member of our family, my brother Jon, by stating that Levin has *four* children, *two* from his first marriage. We are all still reeling from the senseless and brutal murder of our beloved brother and son. One of the many "quotes of the day" that Jon wrote on his classroom blackboard for his students seems fitting here: "Death ends life, not relationships."

LAURA R. LEVIN
Port Washington, New York

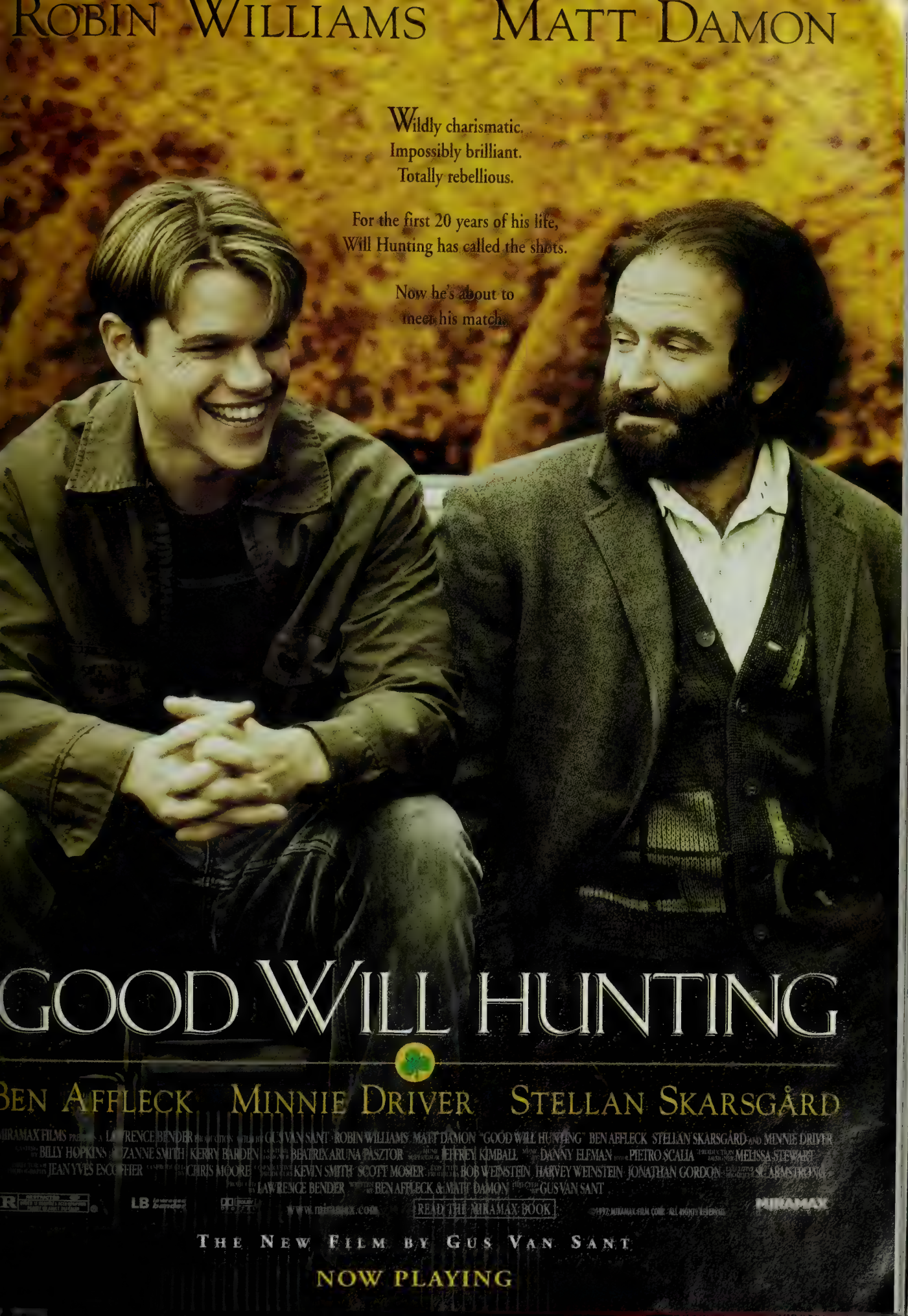
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ILLUSTRATION BY RISKO

The empire unclothed: In his essay on American foreign policy Gore Vidal argued that by trying to save the world from Communism the United States turned its back on the very precepts of the Constitution.


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Christopher Hitchens

SCENES FROM AN EXECUTION

Christopher Hitchens thought he knew all the arguments for and against capital punishment. Then he watched a man being killed—legally, scientifically, and at taxpayer expense



The Louisiana State Penitentiary's electric chair, where 77 inmates were executed between 1941 and 1991.

Last May 22, Larry Wayne White was executed by lethal injection in Huntsville, Texas. As a celebrated double murderer, he attracted few mourners and only a thinly attended vigil of death-penalty opponents. I've been spending a fair amount of time in and around death row in the past few years, and two aspects of White's terminal experience caught my attention. First, he was turned off at six P.M. so that the event was more within the manageable compass of business and working hours. No midnight dramas. Strictly routine. Second, he asked for a last cigarette and was refused it by the prison [illegible] sir, is a nonsmoking facility. Our policy is one of zero tolerance.)

They call it gallows humor for a reason. You may laugh at death all you like, but only on the recognized condition that you allow death the concluding cackle. Kingsley Amis, a man of a deep, awed respect for the Grim Reaper, once wrote:

Death has got something to be said for it:
There's no need to get out of bed for it;
Wherever you may be,
They bring it to you, free!

And, passing from the absurd to the near sublime, Yeats wrote of an Irish airman who "foresaw" his own death: "I know that I shall meet my fate / Somewhere among the clouds above."

The two verses share an ineluctable element of the random and the uncertain. "*Wherever* you happen to be," "*somewhere* among the clouds above." [illegible] existence as a species is made unique by our absolute foreknowledge of death combined with our complete ignorance of its timing.

So here is our paradox. Nothing is more predictable and more certain than death, and nothing is less predictable and less certain. Two classes of people are exempt from this rule: those who plan their own deaths, and those who are sentenced to be "put to death."

Most "advanced" countries in the world have abolished capital punishment. In order to be a fully signatory nation of the Council of Europe, for example, you have to show that you have wiped it from your book of statutes. The very first act of the Constitutional Court of liberated South Africa was to CONTINUED ON PAGE 37



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"We know of 73 documented cases where innocent people were found on death row and released."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30 abolish the penalty of death. Russia, which is applying to join the Council of Europe, has pledged the abolition of capital punishment. And in the diminishing group of countries which claims, with the United States, the right of life and death over the citizen, the Japanese practice a peculiar protocol. They don't notify either the family or the condemned of the time or the date. If you are the leading actor in this little drama, your cue comes without warning. A cell door opens all of a sudden, and a group of strangers is standing there. And then you jump—to a conclusion.

This policy strikes many people as barbarous, which it most certainly is. But, like other similar barbarities, it may have its origin in a vague humanitarianism. Dostoyevsky wrote that if, in the last moment before a man's execution, he were given the alternative of passing the rest of his life on the summit of a bare rock he would choose the rock with gratitude. Some methods of punishment were so ghastly and so elaborate that even the clearly worded U.S. Constitution could only prohibit them with a shudder as "cruel and unusual." The guillotine, a symbol of horror to Albert Camus, was originally installed by the French Republic as a swift and tender alternative to the wheel and the fire. In keeping a man uncertain of the time of his own death, the Japanese are bizarrely and ironically preserving his status as a human being—ignorant of the biggest date he's ever scheduled to make.

This is a country rather short on irony and long on euphemism, so here I am in Potosi, Missouri, in a brightly lit barracks in the Ozark Mountains, to keep a bureaucratic appointment with death. Somewhere in the bowels of this building is a man who knows the very hour of his own terminus, and who has known it for a while.

Samuel Lee McDonald, a burly, balding black man a few months older than myself, is tonight in the ticklish position of being the retiring dean of Missouri's death row. On May 16, 1981, in the parking lot of a convenience store, he shot an off-duty policeman. Officer Robert Jordan had no idea that this evening was to be the one booked for his death. So far from that, he had taken his 11-year-old daughter to buy "treats" for the weekend, and she was the one who had to watch while McDonald shot her father down. And then, as he lay on the ground, blasted him again. Jordan got off several shots himself, two of which hit McDonald. The assailant had to be nursed back to life so that the process of putting him to death could get properly under way.

Every feasible appeal has now been exhausted—this is all happening on the night and morning of September 23-24, 1997—and McDonald has had a "date certain" since July. The American execution drama used to make a special feature of the last-minute reprieve, the phone call from the governor to the death cell and all the rest of it. (At Parchman prison farm in Mississippi, where I once went to talk to someone who was about to be gassed, they still wait a ritual extra few minutes after midnight because, according to unshakable death-house folklore, Chief Justice Earl Warren actually did once call and was told he was just a tad too late.) But in these increasingly unsentimental times, the cry is all for taking the uncertainty out of the procedure. The U.S. Supreme Court, in a number of recent rulings, has effectively allowed states to lower a boom after which not even the production of fresh evidence can save you. "Get on with it" is the slogan. Are the clotted and clogged death rows a national embarrassment? Well, then, let's expedite the business!

As a consequence, it's really quite easy to book an appointment with death, and see for yourself your tax dollars at work. Missouri calls itself the "Show Me State." The jaunty motto appears on the license plates, which, it just occurs to me, are manufactured in the prison system. The Missouri Department of Corrections sent me a form, which asked me my Social Security number and arrest record and all that, and also inquired in a friendly way why I had asked to see an execution in Missouri. I did not reply, "Because Missouri is executing somebody almost every week this month, so I won't have to hang about." I replied, "Because this is a major policy debate and because Missouri is in Middle America and because it's the 'Show Me State.'" They said, Come right on down.

As a designated "state's witness" I was instructed to appear no later than a certain hour on a cold and rainy night. Buzzed in to the interior, I was placed in a room with coffee and doughnuts and overfriendly officials. They did everything they were supposed to do, like giving me the full menu of the condemned man's traditional last meal ("Rib-eye steak, fried shrimp, catfish fillet, Texas toast, French fries, two eggs over easy, and a Coke"). Too *physical* somehow. Too gross and fleshly. Also, I couldn't help recalling Rickey Ray Rector, the man executed by Governor Clinton during the 1992 New Hampshire primary. So gravely impaired and lobotomized was he that, when they came to take him away, he explained that he was leaving a wedge of pecan pie "for later." Laid upon the gurney, he helped them find a vein for the IV because he thought they were doctors come at last to cure him.

Like a majority of capital-punishment states these days, and like the new federal execution "facility" in Terre Haute, Indiana, which I have toured (and which might have the honor and distinction of killing Timothy McVeigh), Missouri now employs the lethal-injection method, first used in the Lone Star State in 1982. This is supposed to be more tranquil and predictable and benign than the various forms of burning, shooting, strangling, and gassing that in the past have squeezed themselves through the "cruel and unusual" rubric. It looks and feels—to the outsider at least—more like a banal medical "procedure." Here's what's supposed to happen, as the supervisors gently and patiently explain. A few hours before the appointment, the "inmate"—as he is still called—is offered a sedative shot. This is seldom refused. At the midnight hour, once attached to a gurney or medical trestle, he is given a dose of sodium pentothal, which induces unconsciousness. This is swiftly rammed home, as it were, by a

"I am clear on one thing. Death requires no advocates."



The lethal-injection chamber at the Potosi Correctional Center in Mineral Point, Missouri. On September 24, 1997, 48-year-old convicted murderer Samuel McDonald was the 27th person executed in this room.

shot of pancuronium bromide, which causes cessation of respiration. A final chaser of potassium chloride immobilizes the heart.

As with the increased practice of "doing" the condemned in batches, in remote prisons and in working hours, this medicalized "putting down" is designed to leach the drama and agony out of the business: to transform it into a form of therapy for society and "closure" for the perp. In Arkansas last January, three men were executed by clinical injection in one night. State corrections officials explained un-ironically that this (a) was cheaper and (b) made for a great saving in wear and tear on staff emotions. "By doing these together," said spokeswoman Dina Tyler, "you only have to make that climb once to get mentally prepared to do this. I think everybody gets a little tense." I think so, too. But I also think that efforts to smooth or remove all that tension are unlikely to be crowned with success. Why, even that night in Arkansas there was a glitch. Kirt Wainwright, one of the three men in the execution queue—they choose the order by prison number—did get himself a brief last-minute stay. Clarence Thomas's clerk called from the Supreme Court. The justices deliberated for an hour. Mr. Wainwright lay strapped to a gurney for this period, with a needle in his arm. Sixty minutes of that and then Justice Thomas called to say they could press the plunger after all. Talk about your stress factor!

There have been some extraordinary scenes in these lethal-injection parlors. Tubes and needles have come adrift. In the execution of former heavy intravenous "users," agonizing periods of time have elapsed in the search for a usable blood vessel. (Rickey Ray Rector underwent what the authorities brusquely termed a "cutdown" as his arm was laid open to find a vein.) The American Medical Association considers it unethical for its members to take part, so the work is often farmed out to inadequately trained corrections personnel. As a result, thicker and heavier layers of denial and obfuscation have already begun to encrust this new, pristine, hygienic, pain-free system. Let me tell you what I saw when Samuel Lee McDonald, No. CP 17 in the Potosi correctional facility, was kicked off the planet in your name this past fall.

The time came when the smiling officials and amiable spokespersons could do no more for the state-witness contingent, and we were delivered into the domain of the mirthless ones with the big keys on the big belts. Escorted through various blindingly lit yards and along massively secure corridors (the other inmates still get to enjoy the traditional "lockdown" on execution nights), we were ultimately led into the lethal chamber itself. Here, a most grotesque and unexpected proscenium had been erected. Mr. McDonald was concealed on the far side of a thick glass window, which was covered first by a rather frail and delicate venetian blind and second by an ordinary curtain. On either flank of the peep-show-size window stood two amazingly butch guards, almost absurdly motionless and impassive in their heavy equipment, each holding the end of a tiny cord in a hamlike fist. As they waited for the order to tug on the dainty strings and unveil the set, I was assailed by a powerful sensation of voyeuristic indecency. There was something camp and wrong and over-rehearsed about it—the result of an ill-considered attempt to impose primness and decorum on something obscene. There was something else, too. It took me a little while to "get" it. It was the moment in *Great Expectations* when Magwitch is put back in the prison hulk:

> No one seemed surprised to see him, or interested in seeing him, or glad to see him, or sorry to see him, or spoke a word. . . . Then, the ends of the torches were flung hissing into the water, and went out, as if it were all over with him.

Snuffed, in fact. That was the word for what I then witnessed. Radiating the most professional indifference imaginable, the huge warders pulled the small strings, and the blinds opened and rose. Through the narrow window we could discern Samuel McDonald, already lying on the gurney, covered to his chin by a sheet, as if all "prepped" and ready for the physician. He was looking urgently at the opposite window, behind which stood his friends and family and lawyer to the number of about six. A third window shielded the family of Officer Robert Jordan. McDonald was speaking hurriedly but inaudibly, yet was perhaps lip-readable by his own team. At 12:02 A.M., he stopped talking. It was as if he'd suddenly gagged or hiccuped, and given a slight arch of his back, as the pentothal—delivered by remote control from offstage—hit him. The one thing this hopeless, helpless splutter didn't resemble, even with the greatest permissible metaphorical strain, was "a moment of truth." A robotic voice from somewhere announced that we had duly witnessed the first injection. The next two were counted out loud, but there was no visible impact. So when the robot voice assured us that the McDonald-shaped form was now "deceased," we had to take the statement on trust. That was it. From gurney to slab in three moves. Hustled out quickly, I heard someone say, "Sam McDonald bought the farm. E-I-E-I-O." Even the most spotless scaffold must have its jester.

Back in the coffee-and-doughnut section, we were introduced to some of Officer Jordan's male relatives. They were black also, which made them as conspicuous in this part of Missouri (if



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"Nobody who is not from the losing classes has ever been in a death cell in these United States."

not in this jail) as Sam McDonald had been. They spoke beautifully and with gravity and bearing, though with that slight constriction and constraint that you sometimes notice when people are employing a script that is not quite their own. Neologistic words like "closure" did not, I could easily see, form part of their daily vernacular. Nonetheless, when they said they had been praying for McDonald and his family and knew what they were going through and bewailed the appalling length of time that everything had taken, they were genuine and—it seemed to me—rather baffled. It's the done thing to feature the victim's family at trials and at executions these days; this after all is a populist and "feeling" epoch. But I had the slight suspicion that, for this family, revenge was sour or perhaps even tasteless.

That of course is presumptuous of me. Otherwise, though, I can be confident in stating that the entire enactment involves a series of unintended consequences. As a state's witness, I was supposed to sign a book saying that everything had been kosher. It was, by definition, too late for that. What if I didn't think so and wouldn't sign? The shrug I got in response only proved that we were, all of us, spending an off night in Absurdistan. For example, who *was* that announcing the chemical hits? Was it a doctor? And why the curtain and the blind before the first injection? "The curtains are to preserve staff anonymity. The EKG is monitored by a physician." Make what you will of that. As in "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" so in the United States of Therapy: "The executioner's face is always well hidden."

Did McDonald have any last words, and if so, what were they, please? Official face consults official cue card. "The inmate's last words were: 'Tell my brothers to be strong.'" Oh, come *on*. I was there. He was talking for very much longer than that, and more animatedly. And why were we not permitted to hear what he said? A final address was the privilege of the condemned even in the Dark Ages. Every attempt, in other words, to make this "procedure" more rational, more orderly, and more hygienic succeeded only in calling attention to something that I'm now firmly convinced is inescapable—namely, that it's irrational, random, and befouled and bemerded with the residues of ancient cruelty and superstition. They can deny it's cruel, they can certainly make it less unusual, but they are still stuck with the task of running a premeditated state killing: Big Government at its worst. (When the French finally abolished the guillotine in 1981 they did so on the noble grounds that "It expresses a totalitarian relationship between the citizen and the state.")

CP 17 was in effect Samuel McDonald's lottery number. I had myself (I am rather disgusted to admit it now) drawn him out of a hat, feeling that I could no longer ride the long train of argument about the death penalty if I kept on getting off before the last stop. I had deliberately not interested myself in his case. I was just surfing the capital-punishment Web, soliciting an invitation to a beheading in a country that seeks the solace of execution almost daily. But if you have seen someone snuffed, choked off and put down, you are almost bound to feel a certain curiosity. It seemed only polite to inquire what had brought us together.

Five days after his 17th birthday, McDonald had enlisted in the United States Army and been promptly sent off to Vietnam. There he earned a Good Conduct Medal, a Vietnam Service Medal, a Vietnam Combat Service Medal, a Combat Infantryman Badge, and two Overseas Service Bars. But he also lost his nerve and his moral center of gravity. At one point during the Tet offensive, he was cut off behind Vietcong lines for five panic-stricken days. On another occasion, he saw almost three-quarters of his company become casualties of war in a single engagement. In his own opinion, he became a killer, if not a murderer. In the course of sweeping a village for "unfriendlies," he heard a sound he didn't care for and machine-gunned an old woman and an infant. Narcotics were his means of escape.

I spoke to his attorney, Richard Sindel, who is your typical overworked and under-recognized capital-punishment pro bono local hero. There's one of these in every state of the union, which isn't anything like enough in these days of photo-op executions on election eve. He showed me the court transcript, where McDonald's former platoon commander, Douglas Falek, had turned up to testify on his behalf and had indeed eloquently done so—but in the absence of a jury. An impressive stable of medical men and psychiatrists, including the reigning experts in the field of Post-Vietnam Stress Disorder, had him down as a classic case. In deciding for death, judges and juries are supposed to consider elements such as premeditation, mental condition, and depraved indifference to human life. In this instance, the jury was denied the information with which to do so. A small break, said Sindel, and his client would have gone to long-term confinement but not to death row. Is it impossible to imagine an arrangement whereby he'd have gone to rehab *before* being turned loose, howling and neurotic and war-torn, onto the streets? Don't be such a bleeding heart. Get with the program.

"The program" is that lottery I mentioned. In spite of a well-publicized decline in the murder rate in New York City, the number of murders and murderers in the United States continues to be many, many times greater per capita than for any comparable country. (And certainly, by the way, for any comparable country that has abolished the death penalty.) There are approximately *one hundred thousand* convicted murderers stockpiled in the American prison system. If they were all to be executed, the country would become a charnel house: a saturnalia of eye for eye and tooth for tooth. So, instead, a certain number are selected for the ultimate vengeance and the severest sanction. You can make the procedure as ponderous and pedantic as is humanly possible. You can build in so many "safeguards" and "reviews" that the process will be lengthened until it's tantamount to torture. But this will only emphasize what you most desire to conceal—the fact that you are running a game of chance with a crooked wheel.

In effect, nobody who is not from the losing classes has ever been thrust into a



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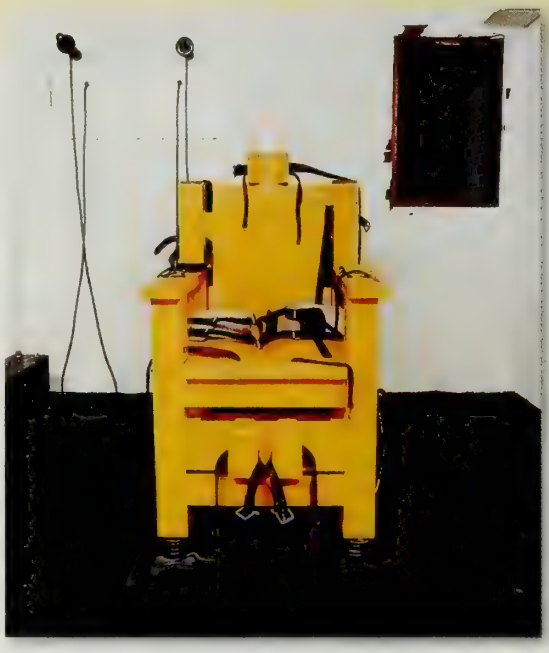
"There are poll-driven executions in this country."

death cell in these United States. Clinton Duffy, the warden of San Quentin who supervised 90 executions, once tersely described the penalty as "a privilege of the poor." You could say, without much of a stretch, that Samuel Lee McDonald drew a fairly low lottery number on the day his mother bore him. That is not to relieve him of his responsibility. But it is not to forget our own either. There are many strong arguments against the very principle of capital punishment, which any intelligent person can deploy, and which I like to think I could deploy conclusively in another article. But it is the *practice,* not the principle, that has been making the most converts lately, and making these converts among the very people who are supposed to administer the business.

"From this day forward," wrote former Supreme Court justice Harry Blackmun in 1994,

> I no longer shall tinker with the machinery of death. For more than twenty years I have endeavored—indeed I have struggled—along with a majority of this Court, to develop procedural and substantive rules that would lend more than the mere appearance of fairness to the death penalty endeavor. Rather than continue to coddle the Court's delusion that the desired level of fairness has been achieved and the need for regulation eviscerated, I feel morally and intellectually obligated to concede that the death penalty experiment has failed.

When I went to Parchman prison farm in Mississippi that time, to see the last hours of Edward Earl Johnson, I asked to meet the warden. Parchman is the most feared prison in the whole of the former Confederacy, and did not earn its reputation by accident, so I wasn't expecting to run into any fancy liberals. But it did seem to me that the warden, Donald Cabana, was undergoing some distress of mind. Now he has resigned from the prison service and written an extraordinary book entitled *Death at Midnight: The Confession of an Executioner,* in which he "comes out" as a convinced foe of the penalty. I tracked him down at the University of Southern Mississippi, where abolitionists don't grow on trees, even if some people wish they dangled from

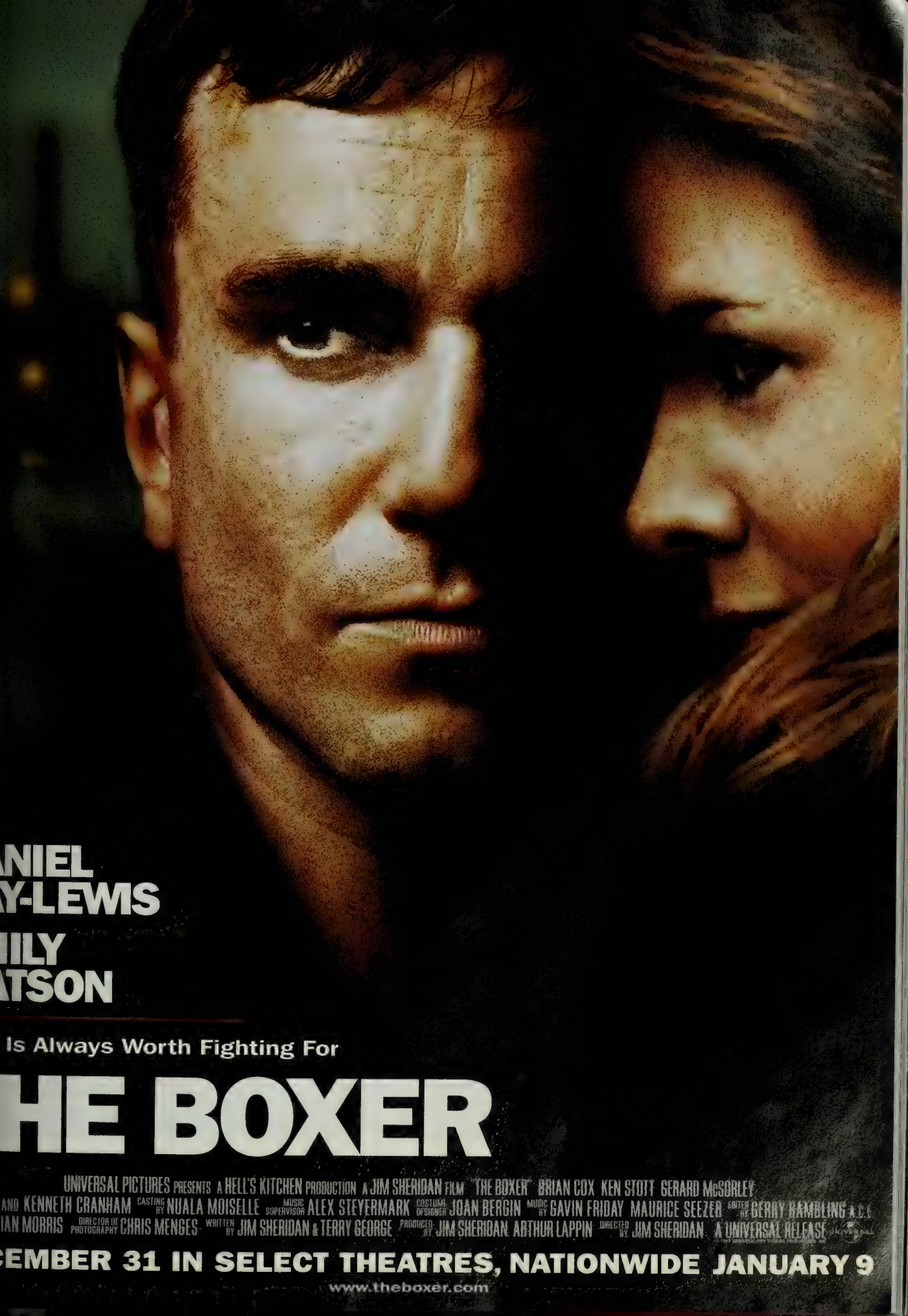


Known as "Yellow Mama," this electric chair has been in use in Alabama since the 1920s. In 1970, it was moved to Holman Prison in Atmore, where it has been used to execute 16 prisoners (3 were mentally retarded, 1 caught on fire).

them. "Christopher," he said, "it's bingo personified. Except that the odds change drastically with your geographical location, your jury pool, your . . . " He didn't need to add race or class or education level.

All right then, what about the victims and what about society's right to be firm? The family members I met at Potosi were concerned above all else with how long it had taken to get justice, if that's what they had indeed ended up getting. Fifteen years is certainly a long time to wait. Speed it up? Be aware of what you may be asking for: an increase in the velocity of the lottery wheel. But between 1973 and the present, we know of *seventy-three* documented cases where innocent people were found on death row and released. Before me is a brilliant and haunting article from the 1995 *Boston University Law Review,* written by Stephen Bright and Patrick Keenan. Its title, "Judges and the Politics of Death: Deciding Between the Bill of Rights and the Next Election in Capital Cases," is a fair guide to its contents. In most states of the union which employ the death penalty, judges are subject to re-election. The effect upon the judicial process is the same as upon the electoral and political processes. There are, as Clinton proved in the Rickey Ray Rector case, poll-driven executions in this country. The contrast between the vulgarity and populism of that and the supposed clinical detachment of the lethal injection is a repellent one. (It's the supporters of capital punishment, in other words, and not its opponents, who rely upon emotion.) Norman Mailer and Phil Donahue have both proposed that executions be either public or televised, so that the voters can be faced with what they are demanding. They, too, are trying to be ironic. The fact is that the crowd already plays more of a role than anyone cares to admit. The lottery affects, and is affected by, even the people who don't play in it.

In my time, I have seen people die and be killed, in sickness and in warfare. I have watched children being born, and I'm morally certain that I once even watched a child being conceived. I would, in principle and in very different degrees, be prepared to see any of that again. It's all, in a manner of speaking, part of life. But I feel permanently degraded and somewhat unmanned by the small part I played, as a complicit spectator, in the dank and dingy little ritual that was enacted in that prison cellar in Missouri. The medical butchery of a helpless and once demented loser, the descendant of slaves and a discarded former legionary of the Empire, made neither society nor any individual safer. It canceled no moral debt. It was a creepy, furtive, and shameful affair, in which the participants could not decently show their faces or quite meet one another's eye. I don't know that I shall ever quite excuse myself, even as a reporter and writer who's supposed to scrutinize everything, for my share in the proceedings. But I am clear on one thing. Death requires no advocates. It is superfluous to volunteer for its service. Those who argue "for" it are missing the point. Edna St. Vincent Millay hit on the truth long before Justice Blackmun and Donald Cabana. "I shall die," she wrote in her poem *Conscientious Objector,* "but that is all that I shall do for Death." Me, too. □


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CNN'S BIG NEWS BEAR

Former star ABC News producer Rick Kaplan may be just the man to lead CNN's domestic operation into the big leagues. Equal parts Edward R Murrow and Cecil B. DeMille, the six-foot-seven-inch Kaplan has one small problem: his cozy relationship with the president of the United States

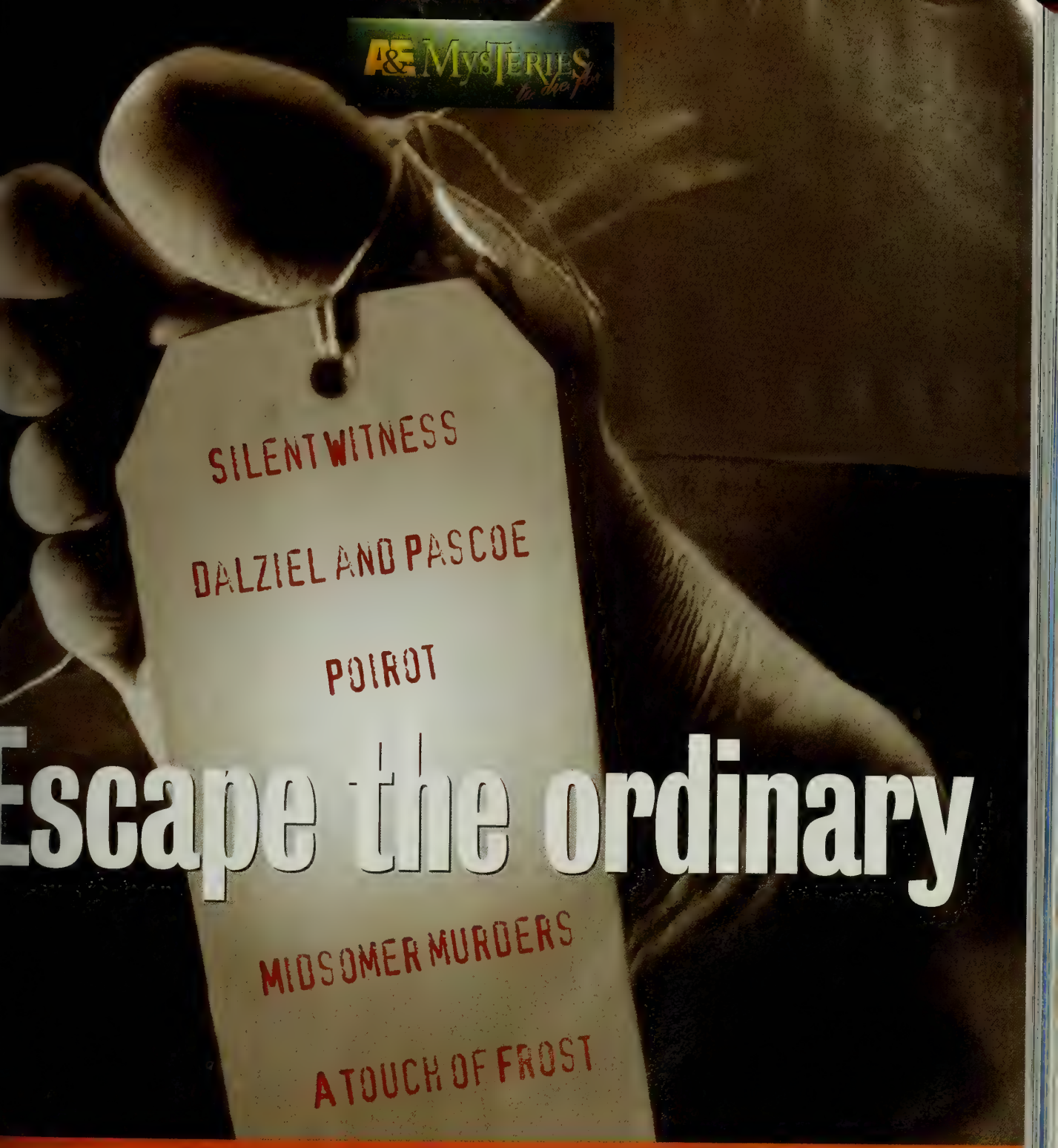
BY DAVID MARGOLICK

One night in New York two years ago, when he was still the executive producer of ABC's *World News Tonight,* Rick Kaplan dined with Fidel Castro, who was in town for the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. It was only the most recent of several times Kaplan had broken bread with the Cuban leader, whom he met 20 years ago on a story. These dinners were usually leisurely affairs, lasting even longer than Castro's speeches, with the topics veering from politics to baseball to U.F.O.'s to bull semen. This time, though, Kaplan had to excuse himself early from the group. "Where are you going?" a surprised Castro asked him.

"I'm actually going to have dinner with *my* president," Kaplan replied.

In fact, Kaplan was due at Café des Artistes, where, under the restaurant's famous Art Nouveau murals of nude nymphs, President Clinton was sharing supper with the elite of New York's Friends of Bill: White House deputy chief of staff Harold Ickes, lawyer Susan Thomases, and Kaplan himself, all

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but Clinton joined by their spouses. Kaplan had made Clinton's acquaintance at about the same time he'd met Castro, but the bond between them had grown far tighter. With Clinton, Kaplan was pal, confidant, career counselor, a heady if complicated—and, to Kaplan's critics, compromising—relationship for someone in the news business.

Suddenly, Kaplan had an inspiration. "Why don't you come?" he asked Castro.

As one of television's premier producers for more than 20 years, Kaplan had defined his career by defying rules; to him, nothing was impossible to bring to the TV screen, even if it meant corralling warring parties in the Middle East or South Africa during his years as executive producer of *Nightline*. Now Kaplan was at it again, trying to overcome decades of enmity in a single grand gesture. Castro paused, for what seemed like an hour, before declining; he didn't want to embarrass Clinton, he explained.

When Kaplan arrived at his second engagement an hour late, Clinton chastised him as only a friend could. "I've just been with the *senior* president," Kaplan explained, noting how he had tried to bring Castro along.

"You should have," Clinton said before he, too, had second thoughts. "Nah . . . the State Department would have killed me."

Rick Kaplan has always been a big-picture guy. Now he has arguably the biggest canvas of all—the world as covered 24 hours a day by the leading all-news network. As the new head of CNN/USA, the troubled flagship of the CNN empire, he has 168 hours of empty airtime every week, and $800 million a year to fill it.

The graph tracing CNN's ratings over the last 11 years, which hangs on the walls around the CNN Center in Atlanta, is entitled "Charting the Course of Human Events," and that's really no exaggeration; every peak represents a seismic occurrence: the Gulf War; the Oklahoma City bombing; two stabbings in Brentwood. In its relatively short life, CNN has become the principal electronic chronicler of our age, the source to which newsmakers themselves invariably turn for news; simply by taking it over, Kaplan has become one of the most important newsmen in the world.

But if the ratings chart resembles an electrocardiogram, it also shows that when there are no wars or freeway chases or royal funerals to cover, CNN descends into a near vegetative state. When Kaplan arrived, its domestic ratings—by network standards puny to begin with—had on some occasions sunk back to the lowest levels since its inception in 1980. Everything about it—the anchors, the sets, the broadcasts—seemed tired. Morale had plummeted. A breathtakingly innovative operation had ossified almost overnight. Kaplan's job is to revive it.



GREAT WHITE HOPE
Ted Turner is counting on Kaplan to reverse the fortunes of CNN, where ratings have bottomed out and morale is basement-level.

"You're the biggest goddamned Jew I've ever seen!" Turner reportedly said to Kaplan.

The first thing you notice about Kaplan is that he is big: six feet seven inches tall, weighing in now at a comparatively slim 250 pounds. Thirty-five years it took him to find a Corvette he could fit into, and when he recently did, he was so tickled that he wrote a check for $40,000 on the spot. Kaplan's size amazes everyone, including the father of CNN himself. "Baby Huey!" Ted Turner exclaimed when he first set eyes on his new executive, using one of Kaplan's several nicknames. "Are you really a Jew?" he reportedly asked incredulously. "You're the biggest goddamned Jew I've ever seen!"

Kaplan's largeness is a matter not just of bulk but also of energy, imagination, pride, volatility, hypersensitivity.

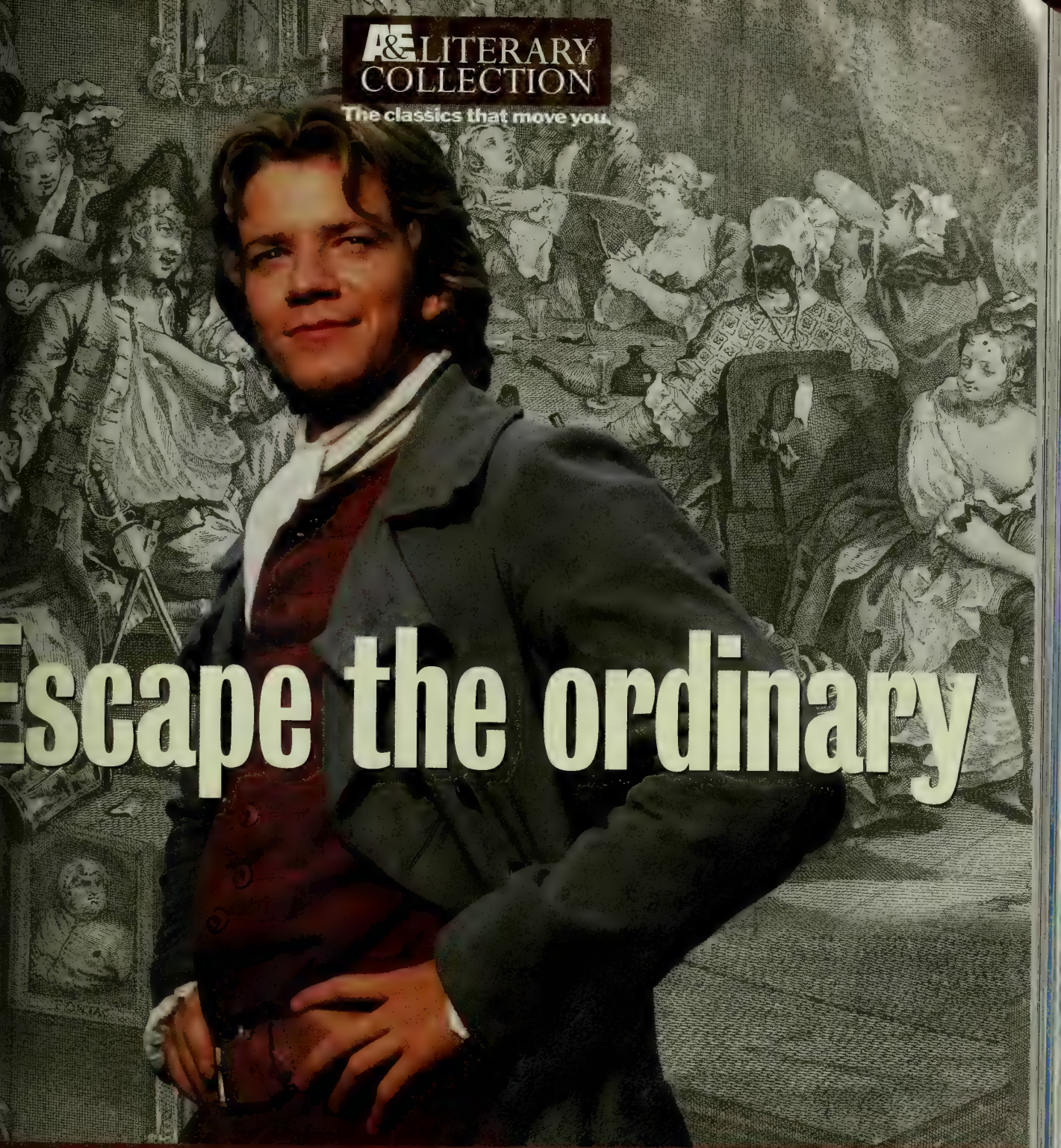
Except for a short clip (on CNN) that showed him playing golf with President Clinton four years ago, Kaplan has spent his entire career behind the camera. He greatly strengthened *Nightline;* he turned *PrimeTime Live* from a laughingstock into a powerhouse; he rescued *World News Tonight* from turmoil. He has won so many Emmys—35, he thinks—that he stopped bringing them home. But after 18 years at ABC, Kaplan may have become too big for the network. In August, after several rancorous months in which ABC couldn't decide whether he was too dangerous to lose or too exasperating to keep, he moved on.

"I miss him personally; I think ABC News will miss him," said Roone Arledge. "On the other hand, in terms of his head he hadn't been here for a couple of years."

Raised in the heartland and reared on television news—Kaplan was two in 1949 when his mother brought home the family's first console—he has an uncanny sense for what people want and how to present it to them. His formula has always been part Murrow, part DeMille; news is serious, but it is also spectacle and storytelling. Early in his career, Kaplan measured success by whether his annual salary in thousands of dollars equaled his age. Now, at 50, he stands to make as much as $1.7 million a year.

Kaplan quickly settled himself in Atlanta, and bought an 8,000-square-foot house (on a golf course) on his second day in town. He has moved fast to juice up stories, provide more context and international coverage, eliminate repetition, and make the network seem less like Nuzak—all this, he insists, without going downscale or tabloid. But it will take months, he concedes, before most viewers see his impact. Kaplan is still searching for a marquee anchorperson. Apart from a series of specials on subjects from campaign fund-raising to China to El Niño, new programming—including weeknight magazines done in conjunction with other Time Warner properties such as *Fortune, Money,* and *Entertainment Weekly*—won't make its debut until next year. Some way off, too, are Sunday-night documentaries and shows for younger viewers.

Thus far, then, the changes at CNN are more in the air than on it: Kaplan is kicking ass with his size-14 shoes. "Within 24



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hours he had changed the place," said Lou Waters, one of CNN's original anchors.

In his new office, a sunless rectangle inside the atrium at the CNN Center, the furniture had yet to arrive, but some of Kaplan's personal effects were already in place: a seat from the old Comiskey Park in Chicago; Norman Rockwell's famous painting of that stalwart citizen rising to speak at a New England town meeting; and what Kaplan called "my favorite picture in life." It was a 1986 Vladimir Sichov photograph of a homeless man, who holds a sign declaring "I'm hungry. Please help"; copies of David Stockman's *The Triumph of Politics* are visible in a bookstore window behind him. "That's trickle-down economics," Kaplan said.

"Rick is a man of volatile temper; he is more easily hurt than is good for a guy who is that big and that visible," said Ted Koppel.



FRIENDLY FIRE
***Nightline*'s Ted Koppel faulted Kaplan for staying in the Lincoln Bedroom; Kaplan replied, "Said by one of Henry Kissinger's confidants."**

Spiffed up from his dreary final days at ABC, with a George Clooney haircut, a fancy suit, and Larry King–type suspenders, he'd been reborn. And soon, he predicted, so too would CNN. To listen to him, as he popped a herd of Gummy Bears into his mouth, his competition lies more with the networks than with the other 24-hour cable news operations, MSNBC and Fox News Channel. And CNN, unlike the networks, doesn't have to worry about selling lightbulbs or washing machines, or balancing the news against *Wheel of Fortune,* or adjusting to irreversibly sliding numbers. "We're underachievers," Kaplan continued. "It doesn't take a lot of viewers for this place to be the biggest hit in the history of news."

Kaplan said ABC had jerked him around for his last year there, then treated him "shabbily" after he left, kicking him in an area that had always been his Achilles heel: his friendship with President Clinton. Earlier, according to Kaplan, ABC had leaked word of CNN correspondent Christiane Amanpour's love affair with a key State Department spokesman, James Rubin, simply to embarrass Kaplan and his new employer. "To the best of my knowledge there is no truth to it, and in fact I did inquire [about the leak]," said David Westin, Kaplan's former boss at ABC News. Officially at least, Westin wishes Kaplan well. He nonetheless seemed surprised that Kaplan warranted serious journalistic attention. "Is this a piece about *Rick?*" he asked incredulously. "A *whole piece* for *Vanity Fair*?"

Promised anonymity, other ABC executives conceded Kaplan's gifts, but said he's a narcissist, a chronic complainer, a poor manager, someone far better at starting things than finishing them. One—who described CNN as "a dipshit organization" and Kaplan as "a very talented producer and a major adolescent"—forecast stormy weather for the two. "I'll bet half your salary that he won't be there a year from now," he said. "He hasn't got the patience. He won't like not being a star. He won't like working with second- and third-rate people. . . . He'll be extremely frustrated at being unable to achieve any substantial rise in the ratings. He'll start bitching about how he can't get the support and money and people he needs, and then how no one understands him and there's someone else who wants him. He'll do what he did [at ABC] and take their money and dare them to fire him. In other words, he'll behave like a little kid and take his bat and ball and go home."

Ted Koppel of *Nightline* disagreed. "Rick is a man of volatile temper; he is more easily hurt than is good for a guy who is that big and that visible, and, yes, he may go off and lick his wounds or explode every once in a while," he said. "But anyone who predicts Rick isn't going to last more than a year . . . I'll make them a substantial bet."

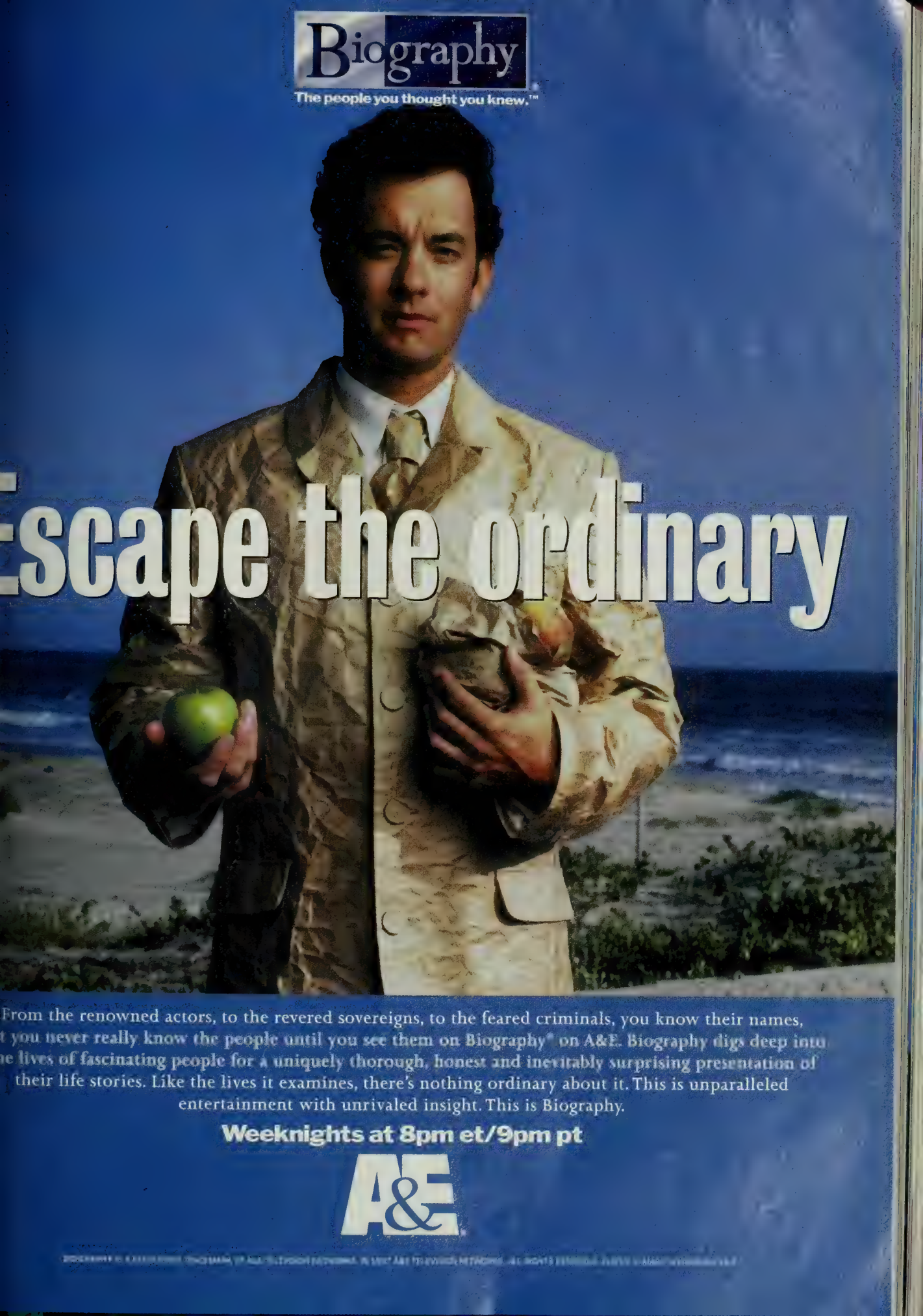
Rick Kaplan is the type who makes impressions quickly—and indelibly. At Cafe Fiorello, an Italian restaurant a few blocks from ABC's New York offices, they dedicated the "power booth" to him. At the nearby Reebok fitness club, to which he repaired during periods of restlessness and resentment, he was called "the Mayor." He hugs people instinctively; his eyes water easily.

His anger is legendary. "The world's largest screaming human being" was how someone described him to the comedian Al Franken, whose mid-season replacement show for NBC (a comedy based on *Nightline*) features an executive producer modeled on Kaplan. "I wish you were dead!" Kaplan once shouted at David Doss, then his subordinate at *PrimeTime Live,* now executive producer of *NBC Nightly News.* Yet those who work for him are his most loyal admirers. They include prominent producers and reporters throughout television, who love him for listening to them, taking their ideas seriously, teaching them the trade, giving them chances, nurturing their careers.

Kaplan's loyalties, in fact, are huge: an only child, he is still in close touch with his kindergarten pals and fraternity brothers. His former neighbors in New Jersey, who double as his informal consultants on whatever he produces, have taken turns visiting him in Atlanta to ease the trauma of the separation. Conversely, those he believes have betrayed him are banished.

Kaplan is very much a Chicagoan, and as Chicagoans so often are, he is a corny, almost Babbitt-like booster of his hometown, shamelessly touting its people and culture in his classic (pronounced "clee-eh-sic") flat ("flee-at") Chicago accent ("ee-ak-cent"). The Bulls have rescued him from years of frustration with the White Sox and the Bears; he has Michael Jordan's autographs on a basketball, baseball, golf ball, and jersey. He returns to the University of Illinois to teach journalism twice a year.

Kaplan is famously compulsive, someone whose calendar, program lineups, and Rolodexes are elaborately color-coded. At ABC News, a place renowned for its high-level philandering, he stayed married to the same woman for more than 25 years, Priscilla Kaplan, a schoolteacher. (They have two daughters, 22-year-old Robyn, a law student in Chicago, and



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Alexis, 19, who goes to college in New Jersey.) Kaplan is not a great intellectual, and for all his travels, he is quite provincial. His notion of a fun Saturday night is a movie at the local tenplex with friends, followed by a trip to the food court. He collects Little Souls dolls, Matchbox cars, and *Star Trek* spaceship models, wears his grandfather's wedding ring, and donates a percentage of his credit-card bills to the A.S.P.C.A. With little fanfare, he pays the hospital or tuition bills of friends in need, or buys a homeless man a suit.

He resists interviews and doesn't much like print reporters, especially those covering television. (When he recalls watching Bill Veeck, the colorful former owner of the White Sox, unscrew his wooden leg to rid himself of an annoying reporter, you get the impression he'd like to be able to do the same.) For one thing, they keep circulating canards about him and the Clintons. For another, he's fed up with all the metaphors and caricatures. "Now you're going to compare me to an animal, like everyone else does, right?" he snapped when the subject turned to his size. "Or Andre the Giant. I'm tired of it." He's still irked by a 1994 *Washington Post* profile that called him a "live volcano," suggested he wouldn't shut up, and had him scarfing down the garlic mashed potatoes he'd ordered with his pasta. Actually, Kaplan claims, it was the *Post* reporter herself who'd ordered the potatoes; *she* offered them to *him*. "I said, 'Sure, great,' and I tasted them," he explained disgustedly. "That gets in the piece, like I was gluttonous, eating everything on the table!"

Kaplan tells wonderful anecdotes once he overcomes his suspicions. "I've got a great story on Gorbachev that nobody's ever heard," he told me at one point: it seems that in his waning days in the Kremlin the Soviet leader took up Kaplan's cell phone and offered to placate Kaplan's wife, who was miffed that her husband had missed their 20th anniversary. Then there's the time Kaplan, annoyed by Arnold Schwarzenegger's constant barbs about his flab, put his arm around him and declared, "You know, Arnie, you're shorter than I thought you were." And in an early conversation as his boss, Kaplan asked Larry King whether he'd had an angio- [illegible] his wedding night.

Considering the hot water his Clinton stories get him into, Kaplan should perhaps tell them more sparingly, but his childlike pride seems to overwhelm his instinct for self-preservation. "Dare I use the word 'brag'?" asked ABC anchor Sam Donaldson. "Rick likes to brag about those things that make him look important and in the know." Colleagues who, having listened to him over the years, think Kaplan has played golf with Clinton dozens of times are flabbergasted to learn it happened only twice. Many have heard of the phone call Kaplan received on the set of *Up Close and Personal,* a 1996 movie in which Kaplan's friend the director Jon Avnet had given him a cameo role. "Mr. President, I'm making a movie; I can't talk to you right now," Kaplan said he told Clinton. One of his fellow extras then asked, "Who was that? Roone Arledge?" "So I said, 'No, that was President Clinton,'" Kaplan said. "And they said, '*You blew off the president?*'"

More memorable was his controversial night in the Lincoln Bedroom of the White House in 1993. "Let me tell you, it's marvelous," he said of the experience. "You just sit there, you don't really sleep very much because you're staring at everything. You know, on the table is *the* Gettysburg Address." He stopped himself. "What I'm doing now, watch what happens. . . . I will be pilloried for this. But if you ever have a chance to sleep in the bedroom, do it.

"I keep looking for what I should be ashamed of, long and hard, and I just can't find anything," he continued, speaking not just of the Lincoln Bedroom episode but also of how he's handled his friendship with Clinton. "I think the day the president was sworn in it wouldn't only have been stupid but terribly unfair to have called him up and said, 'I can't speak to you again.'"

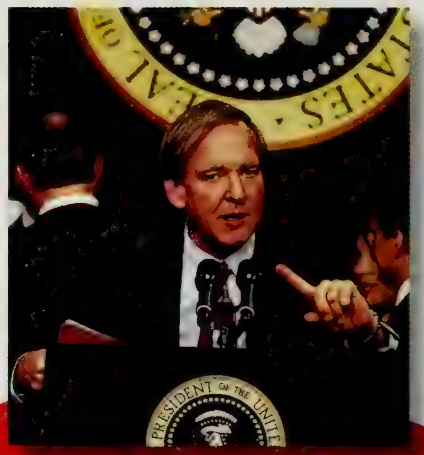
Both Bill and Hillary Clinton declined to comment for this article. "President Clinton thinks highly of Rick and considers him a good friend, but anything affectionate he says would be misconstrued as a comment on Rick's separate and distinct journalistic responsibilities," said White House press secretary Mike McCurry. McCurry noted that Kaplan's first special at CNN concerned campaign finance—a show, he said, which was "more or less a straight hour of kicking the piss out of us."

There are nearly as many F.O.R.'s—Friends of Rick's—as there are F.O.B.'s. Kaplan knew Jane Fonda before Ted Turner did. He's worked for Disney's Michael Eisner and almost worked for Jeffrey Katzenberg, now at DreamWorks. He was formerly buddies with radio personality Don Imus. He's good friends with Andrew Heyward and Andy Lack, the presidents of CBS News and NBC News, respectively; when things soured for him at ABC, he spoke to each. He's gone on tour with the rock band the Eagles. Not long ago his friend Henry Winkler, the Fonz from *Happy Days,* asked him to produce a television show. Benjamin Netanyahu, then Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, attended the funeral of Kaplan's father and, accompanied by an armed bodyguard, the Bas Mitzvah of his eldest daughter. (The Clintons were invited to neither.) Gorbachev, Manuel Noriega, Gloria Estefan, the DreamWorks trio (David Geffen, Steven Spielberg, and Katzenberg), Jimmy Carter, Richard Nixon, George Bush—all have signed baseballs for him. Castro has signed four.

So far, Bill Clinton has autographed

GRAVE MATTERS

To the chagrin of ABC, White House press secretary Mike McCurry interceded with British prime minister Tony Blair's office so Kaplan's CNN would have access to BBC coverage of Princess Diana's funeral.



"President Clinton considers Rick a good friend, but anything affectionate he says would be misconstrued," said Mike McCurry.

just one. But right-wing critics such as Reed Irvine of Accuracy in Media and columnist Brent Bozell have charged that Kaplan let his friendship with the president cloud his news judgment at ABC, and will now turn CNN into the "Clinton News Network."

Kaplan brushes Irvine and Bozell aside contemptuously. "If they weren't such liars they wouldn't make whatever money they make," he said. "There'd be no purpose for them on the planet." ABC colleagues Cokie Roberts, Diane Sawyer, and Peter Jennings say Kaplan never asked them to pull a Clinton punch. "I know that Rick reveled in . . . well, that's too strong a word . . . I know that Rick took . . . was genuinely pleased by his friendship with the Clintons, but I never saw a single example on this broadcast of him defending the Clintons, ever," said Jennings. But Donaldson, veteran ABC reporter Jim Wooten, and ABC's chief investigative producer on Whitewater, Chris Vlasto, say that, in particular instances, Kaplan did seem sensitive to criticism of the president.

Clinton and Kaplan met in early 1977, when Kaplan was a producer for Walter Cronkite, and Clinton was attorney general of Arkansas. (The matchmaker was Susan Thomases, one of Hillary's best friends from Yale Law School.) Both gregarious, both personable, both deeply interested in politics, both news junkies, both charmers, both voracious eaters (their first encounter, appropriately enough, was in a restaurant), they hit it off instantly. "I just remember he was a terrific guy," Kaplan said. "Fun."

When, in the 1980s, Clinton considered trading politics for a million-dollar job on Wall Street, he sought out Kaplan's advice. It was Kaplan's shoulder Clinton cried on, over Chinese takeout in *Nightline*'s New York studio, following his much-ridiculed 32-minute speech-a-thon at the 1988 Democratic convention in Atlanta. "He was sitting there saying, 'My career is over. I'll never be anything,'" Kaplan recalled. "And we all said, 'You know, have a sense of humor about it. If you joke about it first, everyone else will joke about it.' Then he ended up going on *The Tonight Show,* and, by being great, he actually vindicated himself." If anything, Kaplan was at least as close to Hillary, who shares his Chicago roots; he even hired her to work on coverage of the 1980 Democratic convention. When Chelsea Clinton was searching for a 49th-birthday present for her dad, Kaplan sent along a titanium golf club fashioned from a melted-down Soviet missile. After Kaplan's younger daughter underwent serious surgery in 1994, calls from both Clintons helped a near-miraculous recovery, Kaplan said.

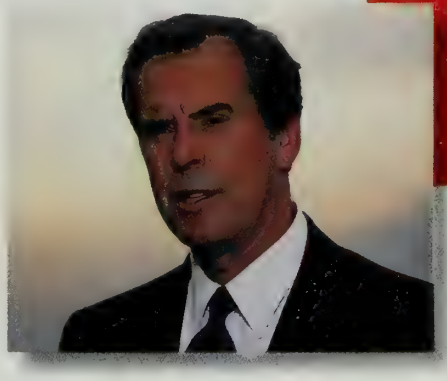
Tom Johnson, the chairman of the CNN networks, said he examined Kaplan's ties to Clinton before hiring him, and saw nothing untoward. But he predicted that the relationship would become an issue, and he was right. First, David Westin accused him of pulling strings by asking Mike McCurry to intercede with the office of British prime minister Tony Blair so that CNN might gain access to the BBC cameras covering the funeral of Princess Diana, rights ABC felt it had a deal for.

According to Kaplan, Westin called him at home, accused him of "playing his White House card," and pledged to play "hardball" with him henceforth. "Not only was I within my rights to call McCurry; I would have been irresponsible had I not," Kaplan said. "David no doubt was told by someone—since he isn't really smart enough to know about this on his own—to go complain, 'Rick is trying to screw you by using his White House connections.' He was totally hostile, and it didn't matter that he didn't know what he was talking about." Making matters worse, he said, Westin or one of his subalterns planted stories in the New York *Daily News* and *The Washington Post,* among other newspapers, about Kaplan's exploiting his Clinton relationship.

"Fortunately, I don't have to depend upon Rick Kaplan deciding whether I know what I'm talking about," Westin replied. "Anyone in this news division would tell you that the notion of involving the White House in a dispute with a third party—particularly a third party in the form of a foreign government—is not in the normal course of doing business." He said he didn't remember mentioning a "White House card," nor had he gone to the press. (Had he put anyone up to it? I asked. "Not that I recall," he replied.)

Shortly thereafter, *U.S. News and World Report* asserted that Kaplan had directed his staff not to use the word "scandal" so freely in Clinton fund-raising stories—stirring up his right-wing critics anew. All he had done, Kaplan countered, was urge prudence. "There are some things that are scandals and other things that are alleged problems or who knows what, and we should just be very careful," he said.

"Rick reveled in . . . well, that's too strong a word . . . was genuinely pleased by his friendship with the Clintons," said Peter Jennings.



PLAYING FAVORITES?
ABC's Peter Jennings claims that Kaplan's friendship with the Clintons never caused a conflict of interest with the producer's network news duties.

According to Kaplan, he is not all that close to Clinton. "When you read some of the things that are written, you'd think I check in with him every day, talk to him all the time, write his speeches for him, mow his lawn," Kaplan complained. "The fact is I don't talk to him very much at all." Still, he says he loves both Clintons and resents having to distance himself from them. "Am I supposed to stand up and announce to the world, 'Goddamn it, he's not that good a friend'?" he exclaimed, pounding on the table. "Goddamn it, that's crazy! I am very proud that I know this president of the United States or any president of the United States."

There is, Kaplan insisted, a double standard at work here: Tom Friedman of *The New York Times* has probably played golf with Clinton 50 times, Kaplan complained, and no one ever faults *him.* ("I wish," Friedman replied. "He's only off by 48 times.") "If you listed

journalists who played golf with President Clinton, I wouldn't make the top 100," he said. Kaplan admires no one more than Koppel, but when told that Koppel criticized him for his sojourn in the Lincoln Bedroom, he couldn't help himself. "Said by a man who was one of Henry Kissinger's confidants," he remarked with a bittersweet laugh. "So Henry's his friend; so Bill Clinton's mine. Well, guess what? He made friends with the secretary of state, I made friends with an attorney general of Arkansas." He chuckled again. "Who was shooting higher? I can't help it; my guy hit the White House, your guy couldn't, because he wasn't a natural-born citizen."

"We alternately fought each other and supported each other extravagantly," said Diane Sawyer.

Kaplan was born in the Rogers Park section of Chicago. His childhood was filled with friends and Democratic politics; Chicago mayor Richard J. Daley and John F. Kennedy were icons in his home. He envisioned a life of political activism and joined the 1968 presidential campaign of Senator Eugene McCarthy as an advance man. A week later, when Bobby Kennedy won the California primary, Kaplan prepared to switch sides, and headed to Kennedy's hotel to meet him. He ended up that night alone on a Santa Monica beach, watching the waves, listening to radio reports about Kennedy's slow death. He contemplated a radically altered future, outside politics.

After producing a rock concert featuring Marvin Gaye, Junior Walker and the All Stars, and (another) Baby Huey at Chicago's Aragon Ballroom (and losing money on the deal), he joined the Chicago CBS affiliate, WBBM-TV, as a copyboy. Though officially off-air, he wormed his way on often enough for AFTRA, the union for broadcast talent, to file a grievance. By 1971 he'd joined the *CBS Morning News* in New York. On his first day, he met his hero. "He stuck out his hand and said, 'I'm Walter Cronkite,'" Kaplan recalled. "I was in awe. I was frozen." Within two years, he had joined Cronkite as a producer.

Kaplan's work on the Carter campaign in 1976 impressed many people, including Jim Wooten, then covering the story for *The New York Times*. "Rick sees himself as a big-time operator—'Let's get the choppers, let's get the limos, let's get the Lear'—in a way that was fairly fascinating to ink-stained wretches," Wooten recalled. "I always found that Citizen Kane aspect of him endearing. He was doing 50 percent journalism and 50 percent show business, which is a pretty high ratio in television news."

PRINCESS DIANE
Kaplan grew irritated with Sawyer's perfectionism at *PrimeTime Live*, but said, "She's worth the aggravation."



Also impressed was ABC's correspondent on the campaign, Sam Donaldson. He recommended him to Roone Arledge and his assistant David Burke, who persuaded Kaplan to make the risky move to then upstart ABC. Kaplan worked first on *World News Tonight*, then ran ABC's morning news shows. In 1984 he took over *Nightline*. Koppel was initially wary of Kaplan; he disliked his volatility and thought him too "showbizzy." But the program and the relationship hit their stride when Kaplan devised *Nightline*'s historic 1985 visit to South Africa, where opposing factions debated apartheid. Three years later, Kaplan did much the same thing with Israelis and Palestinians. All told, there were more than 1,200 programs over six years, along with related "town meetings" such as the 1991 session pairing Boris Yeltsin and Gorbachev. When he ran out of topics, Kaplan had staff members place suggestions in a hat, with a prize awarded for the winning tip.

Kaplan has had a lifelong love affair with the movies; he once bought two chairs from the Rick's Cafe set used in *Casablanca* for $35 apiece (one is now displayed at Planet Hollywood in New York, insured for $25,000). In 1989 Howard Stringer, then president of CBS Television, nearly lured Kaplan back with an offer to let him produce made-for-television films. Instead, Arledge persuaded Kaplan to rescue *PrimeTime Live*, which was in turmoil six weeks before its debut. Kaplan presided over the show's embarrassing birth, troubled infancy and ultimate success.

Some insist that Sawyer was the real power at *PrimeTime Live*, and that unhappy with Kaplan's efforts to rein her in she lobbied Arledge to replace him. Kaplan conceded Sawyer probably had the clout to get rid of him, but said he never sensed anything afoot. He said that at times he grew irritated with Sawyer's perfectionism and pessimism, but that he'd happily work with her again. "She's just an extraordinary talent and worth all the aggravation," he said. As for Sawyer, she said that she and Kaplan "alternately fought each other and supported each other extravagantly." Never, she said, did she want him replaced.

When Clinton needed airtime to defuse his Gennifer Flowers problem, Kaplan became a player in presidential politics. In his 1994 book, *Strange Bedfellows*, a study of the press coverage of the 1992 presidential campaign, Tom Rosenstiel of the *Los Angeles Times* describes a frantic evening when Clinton called Kaplan repeatedly, baring his soul and seeking strategic advice. Kaplan advised Clinton to stay off lower-rated shows such as *Today* and *Good Morning America;* if you do *60 Minutes*, he said, go with a tough interviewer such as Mike Wallace or Morley Safer. To his critics, Kaplan had crossed the line.

Kaplan maintained that his only objective was to get Clinton on *PrimeTime Live*, or at least on ABC. But then Clinton chose *60 Minutes* and asked Kaplan what he thought. "What am I supposed to say? Tell him to screw off and come back to ABC?" Kaplan asked. "He'd made up his mind, at which point I said to him, 'If you're going to do *60*, do *60* and don't be concerned about who the toughest interviewer is; the tougher the interviewer, the better you are." Clinton then asked Kaplan what to say if asked whether, quite apart from Flowers, he'd had *any* extramarital trysts. "And I just said, 'Whatever answer you give, I'm going to run it myself 100 times between



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"And that was the total extent of it," he continued. "It's the kind of stuff journalists say to politicians, whether they're friends or not. There isn't a journalist in the world who hasn't given advice of that sort."

Ten months later, on the eve of the election, Sam Donaldson did taped interviews with Clinton and President Bush. Donaldson was in what he called "my manic, take-no-prisoners tough-guy mode," he recalled, and was "equally bad or equally good" with both candidates. But to Kaplan, Donaldson had been much harder on the challenger. "You've got to do a tag line to make it clear that you don't hate Clinton," Kaplan told him. This Donaldson dutifully did ("That's commitment," he stated, referring to Clinton's campaign style), but begrudgingly. Donaldson called Kaplan "a terrific executive producer," but added, "I think that, without meaning to, Rick was letting his feelings get in the way there." Kaplan insists it wasn't Clinton he was protecting, but Donaldson.

During that same campaign, Reed Irvine charged, Kaplan sat on Clinton's famous 1969 letter to his draft board for three days, until Clinton could disarm the issue on *Nightline* by discussing it more earnestly than he could on the evening news. Preposterous, Kaplan says. Then *Spy* magazine and *Washington Monthly* claimed that Kaplan had not only arranged for Don Imus to interview Clinton in order to help out in the New York primary but also scripted Clinton's best line, at least for the local audience: that "Bubba" was really Arkansan for "mensch." "Totally, utterly, completely a lie," Kaplan said.

Kaplan and Imus have barely spoken since Kaplan criticized his much publicized remarks to a group of White House correspondents in 1996, some of which Imus had gone over with him beforehand. Kaplan says what moved him to attack Imus in print afterward weren't the cracks about Clinton or him ("Kaplan humped the Clinton administration harder than O.J. has his video") but those about Peter Jennings ("What's under his desk? I mean, besides an intern?"). Evidently feeling betrayed, Imus has dismissed Kaplan as a "doofus" ever since. Kaplan says this is really Imus's way of caring; Imus would not comment.

By 1993, Bill Clinton was president, and Kaplan was running out of gas and losing interest in *PrimeTime Live*. Arledge's decision to move him to *World News Tonight* in January 1994 solved that problem and a second one as well: the evening news show was struggling. Here, however, Kaplan's Clinton problem loomed even larger; he insists—though Jennings says he knew nothing about it—that he made it clear to his bosses he'd stay only until 1996, an election year. "I had no concerns about my ability to be fair," he said. What did worry him was that his usual critics would harp on "this F.O.B. bullshit."

"I think, without meaning to, Rick was letting his feelings [for Clinton] get in the way" of objective coverage, said Sam Donaldson.



TO SERVE AND PROTECT
When Kaplan thought ABC's Sam Donaldson was being too hard on Clinton during the 1992 campaign, he made the newsman add a favorable tag line to his coverage.

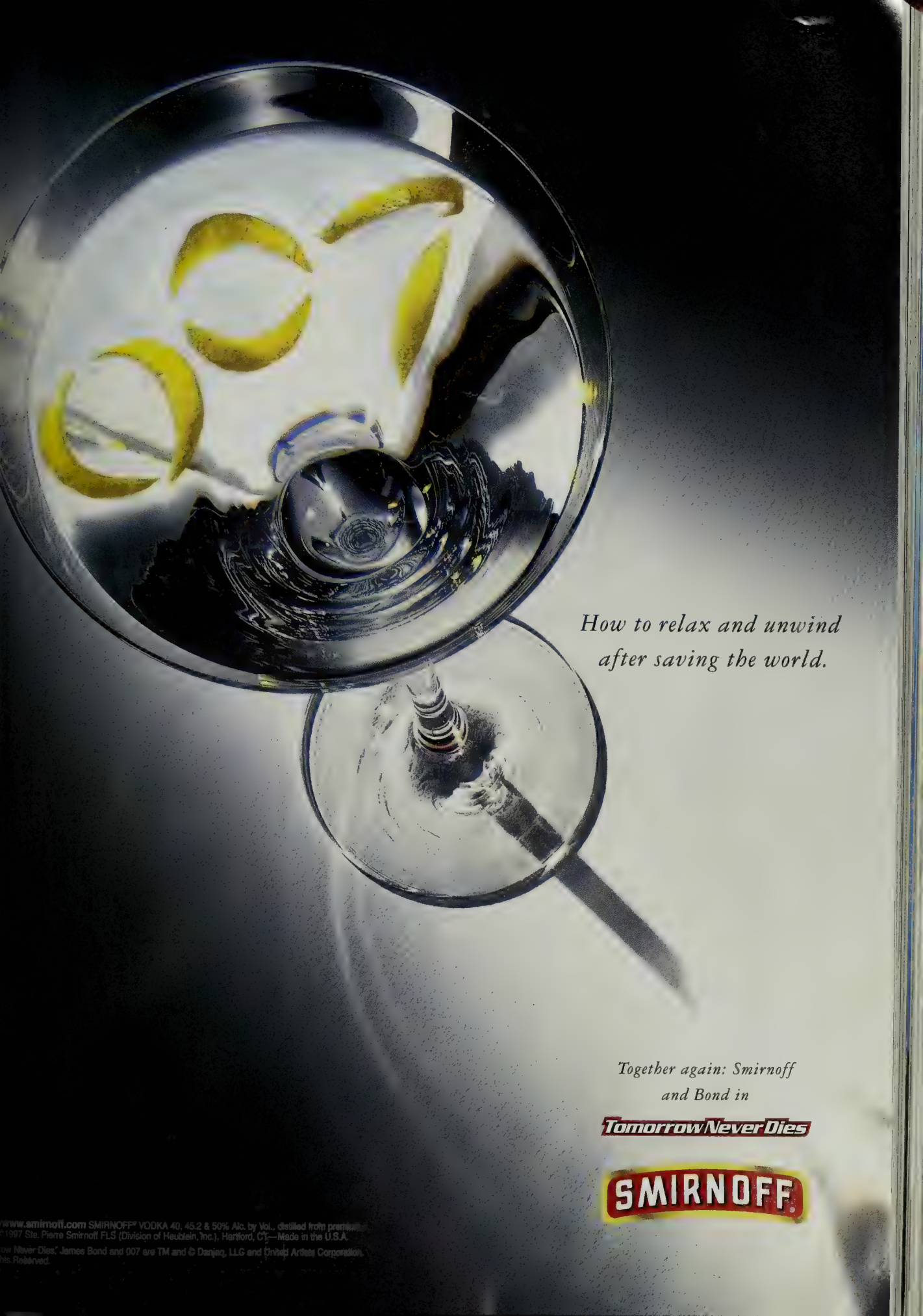
Kaplan's first contretemps on the evening news had nothing to do with Clinton. Only a few days into his new job, he placed Cokie Roberts in front of a picture of the Capitol in the studio, but had her wear a trench coat and scarf to make it look as if she were really on the scene. Kaplan concedes the move was "dumb"; at the same time, he makes it sound as if it were no big deal. "It's not like I supered her [located her with a caption] on the top of Mount Everest and made an event out of it," he said. He remains angry over the reprimand he received from a senior vice president at ABC and its ethics czar, Richard Wald, particularly since Wald—whom he called "a jerk" and "a very destructive human being"—never mentioned it to him personally, placing it in his file instead. Wald declined comment.

Kaplan has taken some precautions during the Clinton era; there have been no more presidential golf games. Inevitably, though, as investigations widened and documents proliferated, his name periodically popped up. Phone logs revealed that on the night Vince Foster killed himself Kaplan called Hillary Clinton. "I knew they were all great friends and you know that she's gotta be totally depressed, so it was just like to say 'Hey, I'm really sorry,'" Kaplan said. When Webster Hubbell resigned, he called him too. "I happen to like Webb," Kaplan said. "I would have just said 'Good luck,' or something."

In late October 1994, Kaplan killed Jim Wooten's exclusive interview with an Arkansas state trooper who claimed a Clinton aide had tried to muzzle him; after that, Wooten refused to do any more pieces on Whitewater. Wooten clearly likes his former boss, whom he called "a character in an age without them." But on Clinton, he said, Kaplan had "a blind spot." Also convinced that "the bar kept getting higher" for putting Whitewater stories on the program, Chris Vlasto, *World News Tonight*'s investigative producer for Clinton-related stories, would sometimes shop them around to other ABC News shows. True, in February 1994, *World News Tonight* devoted an extraordinary 18 of its 22 minutes to a primer on Whitewater. But that segment had been held for a month, and ran only after *Nightline* tried to run it first.

"There were stories I yanked, and stories I pushed, and stories I told [Wooten] to do," Kaplan said. "I don't think I've ever pulled a story, especially in that area, that anybody particularly thinks I made a wrong call on." And for all his frustrations, Vlasto called Kaplan "the best boss I ever had."

In June 1994 show business again beckoned: this time, Oprah Winfrey offered Kaplan a chance to create programs. But Arledge and Robert Iger, president of ABC Television, wouldn't


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et him go. Instead, Iger promised him a etwork job that would allow Kaplan's reative impulses to blossom.

But Arledge, fed up with Kaplan's igh-maintenance personality, and thin-kinned on the matter of loyalty, was con-ent to let Kaplan languish. Sure enough, s the 1996 election and his self-imposed leadline approached, Kaplan grew re-entful and increasingly remote, spending ver lengthening lunch hours at the Reebok Club. Reporters looking for him n his office learned to call early. Kaplan cknowledges his fade-out, which some lame—along with ABC's restrained cov-rage of the Simpson case—for the news how's slow slide. "October, November, December, I was not the world's greatest xecutive producer," he said. "I was get-ing very close to the point where I was ust going to walk out and stay home."

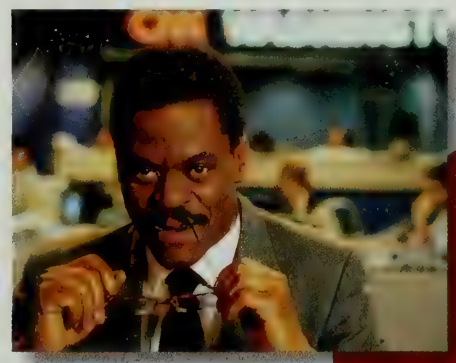
But when he finally got out—he was, eginning in January 1996, ABC Televi-ion's "executive producer for special proj-cts"—things only got worse. By this oint, Iger had moved upstairs to become ead of ABC Inc.; Westin was Kaplan's oss and, Kaplan maintains, was too usy learning his new job to help Kaplan vith his. While an hour-long special on IDS, with actress Morgan Fairchild and ootball announcer Dan Dierdorf, was re-varding, "Up Front," the $2 million Lin-oln Center extravaganza in which ABC nveiled its fall programming, was no big leal to Kaplan—even though he persuad-d Clinton to contribute a clip to it. Only twice, Kaplan says, has he asked uch work-related favors of the president; he other time, he had Clinton call the lying father of an ABC colleague.)

Far more aggravating was the gala spe-cial for the 25th anniversary of Disney World that Kaplan produced. Kaplan njoyed taking friends to Disney World nd showing them the giant statue of Mickey Mouse, which, when viewed rom the right angle, seemed to have Mickey's manhood hanging out of his ants. But everything else about the proj-ct was unpleasant: first, he considered he ABC entertainment executives he dealt vith ignorant, meddlesome, and excessive-y cautious; then Westin slashed the nearly ompleted program to an hour, even after Kaplan believed Eisner and Iger had ap-roved something twice as long.

Halving the show, Kaplan said, was Westin's way of standing up to ABC's ew owners—his way of saying, "These ssholes at Disney won't tell us what to lo." Westin denies it all. "I'm flattered hat Rick would have the fairly bizarre perception that I would have the authority to overrule Michael Eisner and Bob Iger," he said. "I'm flattered, but I can assure you there is absolutely no truth in it."

By last February, Kaplan was fed up with ABC Hollywood, and ABC Hollywood was evidently fed up with him. Kaplan talked to Katzenberg about projects at DreamWorks, but both men concluded that his heart was really in news. Nothing ABC offered him, such as the chance to fix *Good Morning America,* tempted him. A long memo to Arledge, outlining his job preferences, not only went unanswered; they made fun of it behind his back. In fact, Kaplan was ready to leave and could do so contractually, he said, in September 1997. (Westin disagrees, but would say nothing more about what he termed internal matters.) So he did nothing.

He spent many days at home, or in Chicago, or at the Reebok Club, or in Cleveland tending to various ailments, or at an ashram in California. "Everyone looked at me and said, 'It's the dream job; you're getting a terrific salary to sit on your butt,'" he recalled. In fact, he was a workaholic without work, and he developed the classic symptoms of withdrawal: depression, weight gain, fatigue. Kaplan said it wasn't true, as I'd been told, that he bragged about making $26,000 a week for doing nothing. "I hated it," he said. "I was collecting more than that, by the way," he then added.



A SHAW THING?
CNN newsmen such as Bernard Shaw feel that Kaplan has already brought a sense of excitement and innovation to CNN. Doubters claim Kaplan will get frustrated fast with the small audiences and journeyman talent at his new job.

For two years, Tom Johnson of CNN had been courting him. In the fall of 1996, Kaplan had stopped by CNN Center and been "blown away" by the size and sophistication of the operation. Westin said that if Kaplan agreed to go nowhere but CNN, ABC would spring him. Kaplan said no; he didn't want ABC dictating his future, nor did he want Westin boasting that he'd gone to CNN only because ABC wouldn't let him go anywhere else. "They were apprehensive that I would go to another network," Kaplan said. "They should have been apprehensive that I would come here, but that's all right. They'll learn that."

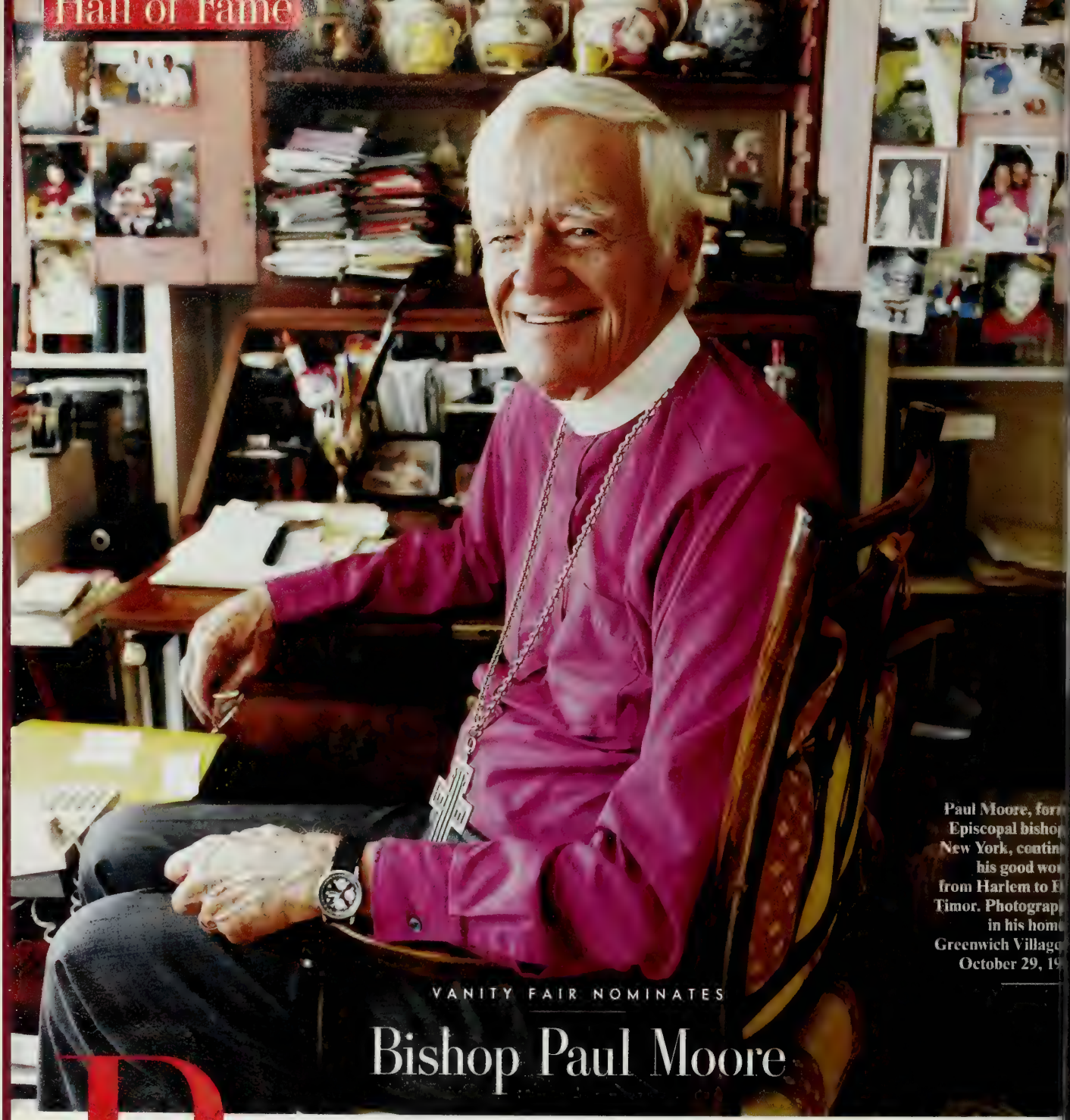
A week before Hong Kong changed hands in July, Westin asked him to run ABC's coverage of the transfer. Kaplan refused. "I just said, 'I don't want to do stuff for you,'" he recalled. "And he said, 'You know, we're paying you a lot of money.' I said, 'You can stop paying me a lot of money tomorrow,' and he was very angry at me for that, but what can I tell you? Too bad. They were paying me a lot of money for months to do nothing. And I was trying to tell them, 'Stop paying me. Let me go on with my life.'" In August, ABC finally did. "I may just wrap him up in one big package with a bow and send him to you," Arledge told Johnson.

At CNN, "there was a collective sigh of relief" when Rick Kaplan came. "He's one of us," said Bernard Shaw.

Though he'd spent 18 years at ABC, Rick Kaplan got no party when he left. But at CNN he received a hero's welcome. "He has brought—how shall I put this?—a sense of the big time to CNN: big-time programming, big-time expectations, big-time accountability," said Frank Sesno, chief of CNN's Washington bureau, after escorting him around the place in September.

Bernard Shaw, the CNN anchorman in Washington, was equally enthused. For more than an hour and a half during that first meeting, he recalled, Kaplan stood by the assignment desk laying out his vision, firing up his new troops. When he finished, Shaw said, "there was a collective sigh of relief." Why relief?

"That he's one of us," he replied. □



Paul Moore, for
Episcopal bisho
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Greenwich Village
October 29, 19

VANITY FAIR NOMINATES

Bishop Paul Moore

BECAUSE he broke the bonds of wealth and privilege to devote his life to the poor, the disenfranchised, and the oppressed. BECAUSE he won the Navy Cross and Silver Star on Guadalcanal and has since confounded his old Marine buddies by making the pursuit of peace a central purpose of his life. BECAUSE as a young priest in a ghetto parish in Jersey City, he pioneered a new form of urban ministry. BECAUSE he brought the lessons of the ghetto to the sheltered confines of Indianapolis, and later to the complexities of our national capital. BECAUSE in two decades as bishop of New York, he comforted the afflicted and afflicted the comfortable—and instilled a social conscience throughout his Episcopalian domain. BECAUSE he opened the clergy to women and gays. BECAUSE he retains a healthy skepticism about the motives of Big Business, and deplores the mixture of nationalism and religion that fuels the Christian right. BECAUSE, at the age of 78, he cites Bishop Desmond Tutu and Martin Luther King Jr. as his role models. BECAUSE he still marches for the cause of urban America, still fights for the downtrodden, still travels as far as East Timor to raise the banner against repression. BECAUSE he has suffered great personal pain yet retains his faith and his sense of humor. BECAUSE he so loves his nine children and his wife and his innumerable friends. BECAUSE he can shank a golf shot, skip a tennis ball, let a fish get away—and swear, well, just like a Marine. BECAUSE he tells his story so movingly in his new memoir, *Presences*. BECAUSE, at six feet four, he looks like God—I think.

—OSBORN ELLIOT

PHOTOGRAPH BY GASPER TRINGALE


Turns out roughing up punks ain't really necessary. On account
of most guys and gals hurt *themselves* by not getting enough calcium.
So reach out for 3 glasses of milk a day. Your body will thank you.
Especially if we don't have to tell you again.
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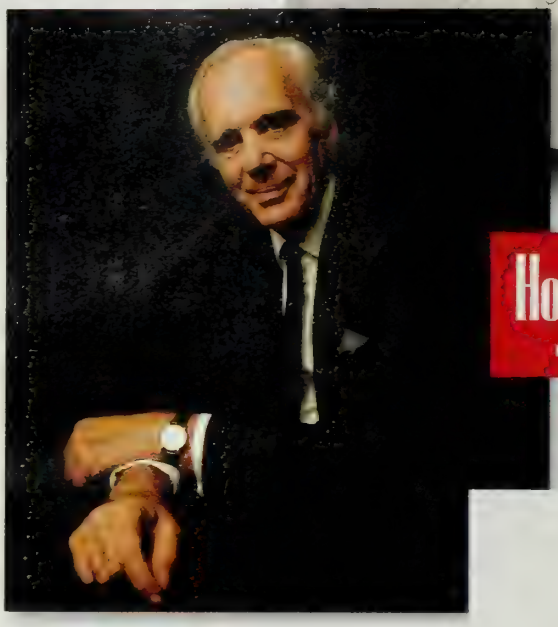
LA FEMME NATASHA

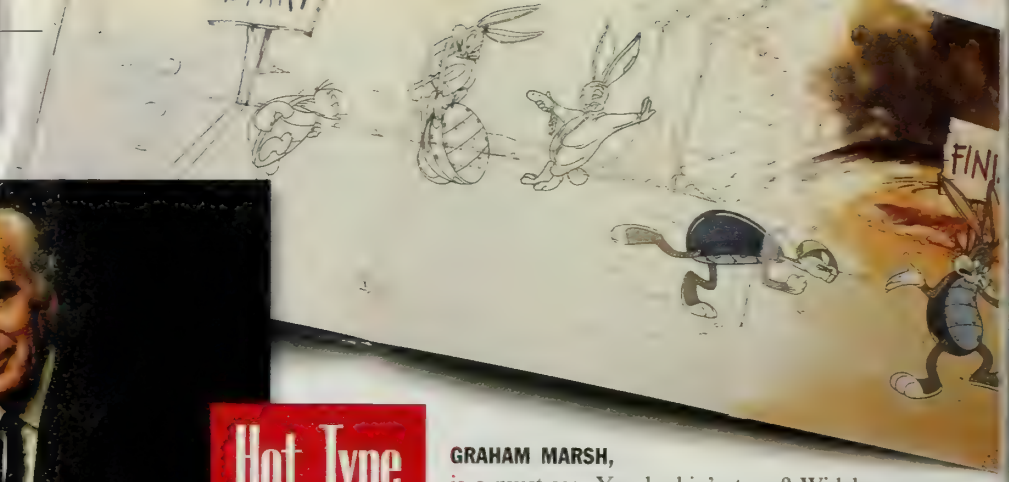
NATASHA RICHARDSON as *Cabaret*'s Sally Bowles? What kooky, counterintuitive casting. After all, Christopher Isherwood's most enduring creation was a gamine stray, a bohemian she-cat bobbing on a sea of lumpy mattresses, whereas Richardson, a lofty, tawny creature of bearing and breeding, comes from a pride of lions. (She is also wed to the powerful head and loins of Liam Neeson.) Onstage, the actress has risen to full assurance, receiving awards for her Broadway debut in the title role of Eugene O'Neill's *Anna Christie* and acclaim in a West End production of *High Society*. Starring in *Cabaret*, which opens next month at Club Expo, Richardson will be braving a strong head wind. Not only is the image of Liza Minnelli in the movie version imprinted on everyone's memory, but the musical's decadence seems almost innocent now—Berlin *Boogie Nights*. However, the Roundabout Theatre Company production, in which the theater itself will serve as the Kit Kat Klub, offers the prospect of a slinky, kinky neon immediacy that banishes all traces of nostalgia. With a Sally Bowles who really knows how to wrap herself around a chair.

—JAMES WOLCOTT



PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM JONES



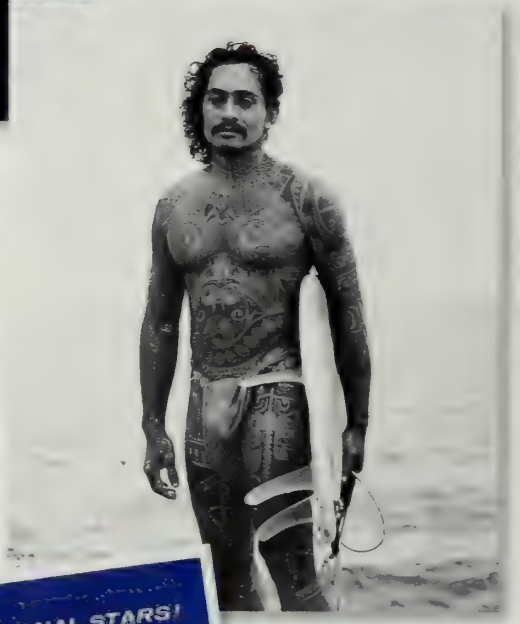


Hot Type

Attention, all memoirists under 60: Put down your pens! Novelist **MARIA FLOOK** has taken home the brass ring with her searing family bio, *My Sister Life* (Pantheon), a fierce, riveting tale of her perversely erotic mother and the search for her missing older sister.

Also this month: Think your boyfriend's a dog? Fetch *Animal Husbandry* (Dial), **LAURA ZIGMAN'S** charming debut novel, about a woman's quest to truly understand the mind (and mating rituals) of the male beast. **DAVID BOWMAN'S** ferociously inventive comic novel, *Bunny Modern* (Little, Brown), is set in the New York City of the future, where ninja nannies roam the streets protecting their keep from infertile kidnappers. Tahitians, Peruvians, and Long Islanders are just a few of the radical surf tribesmen represented in photographer **PATRICK CARIOU'S** awesomely beautiful portrait collection, *Surfers* (PowerHouse). From super-suave James Bond to *Über*-bimbo Barbarella, *Film Posters of the 60s* (Overlook Press), edited by **TONY NOURMAND** and **GRAHAM MARSH**, is a must-see. You lookin' at me? Widely regarded as the Hollywood director most steeped in history, obsessive film collector **MARTIN SCORSESE**, with writer **MICHAEL HENRY WILSON** at his side, leads a film-lover's safari in *A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies* (Miramax Books). The bilious thrice-wed antihero of **MORDECAI RICHLER'S** comic novel *Barney's Version* (Knopf) nostalgically recalls his passion for wine, women, and the Montreal Canadiens. In *Waiting for the Barbarians* (Verso), *Harper's* editor in chief **LEWIS LAPHAM** ponders the future of a democracy engineered by vacuous smoothies, morally bankrupt greed heads, and enthusiastic despoilers of the environment. Two decades of *Rolling Stone* rock critic **MIKAL GILMORE'S** intimate and incisive cultural criticism and reviews are amassed in *Night Beat* (Doubleday). In **ALICE McDERMOTT'S** *Charming Billy* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), Irish-American pals and family gather in a bar to mourn and celebrate the life of their charismatic and troubled friend. African-American fashion divas such as Iman and Naomi pose au naturel in photographer **THIERRY LE GOUÉS'S** *Soul* (PowerHouse). Who hasn't been regaled by the high jinks of Elmer, Daffy, and Porky (no, not the Senate Finance Committee, the Looney Tunes gang)? *Warner Bros. Animation Art*, by **JERRY BECK** and **WILL FRIEDWALD** (Hugh Lauter Levin), is the catalogue raisonné saluting the creators and the craft of cartoons. Likewise, G.O.P. speechwriter-puppeteer **PEGGY "EVIL EMPIRE" NOONAN** tells how to "communicate your ideas with style, substance, and clarity" in *Simply Speaking* (ReganBooks). Read my lips: That's all, folks!

—ELISSA SCHAPPELL





From top: The Process of Animation, *1996, by Bob Clampett, hand on the Warner Bros. cartoon "Tortoise Beats Hare," 1941; Harper's editor Lewis Lapham; surfer Roonui from Mooréa, 1994; a film poster for the W.W. II epic* The Longest Day, *1962.*



GET FRESH

WITH A MAIN SQUEEZE

WITH A TALL SMOOTHIE

WITH A STRAIGHT SHOOTER

WITH A SEXY SHAKE



Brian Stokes Mitchell plays Coalhouse Walker Jr. in Ragtime.

Brian's Song

Normally the term "breakout performance" is reserved for ingenues who strike gold after a Mountain Dew commercial or an indie film. But Brian Stokes Mitchell, the dynamic actor currently thrilling audiences in the musical *Ragtime*, is finally breaking into bona fide stardom after, oh, a scant 20 years in the business. You may—or may not—remember Mitchell from his days on *Trapper John, M.D.*, or from *Jelly's Last Jam*. But it is his portrayal in *Ragtime* of Coalhouse Walker Jr., an indignant piano player turned terrorist, which could finally catapult the 39-year-old actor into the pantheon of today's major leading men. The Seattle-born Mitchell credits his *Ragtime* success to the show itself, which "has a strange power about it," he says. "Whether you're a William Morris agent or a cafeteria worker, the American images speak to us in a deep way." After his 22-week run in *Ragtime* in L.A.—with more than a few William Morris agents in the crowds—Mitchell may grow accustomed to working on soundstages rather than on Broadway stages very soon. "Before *Ragtime*, studio heads were very uninterested," he says. "Now I get their full attention. It's kind of like 'Whaddya want to do next!?'"

Night-Table Reading

Lillian Brown,
author, image consultant:
A Life on the Road,
by Charles Kuralt (Ivy Books).
"When the pressure cooker in Washington heats up, I take a nostalgic trip with Charles to meet the 'common man.'"





Diego Della Valle,
J. P. Tod's creator:
On the Black Hill,
by Bruce Chatwin (Penguin).
"I am fascinated by the author's style of writing because he transports you into a faraway reality with a story that focuses on an area of only 20 miles."

Maxwell,
singer:
Three Magic Words,
by U. S. Anderson (Wehman Brothers).
"Brings clarity to the constant necessary blur."





Richard Gluckman,
architect:
A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush,
by Eric Newby (Viking).
"I'm re-reading this true, delightful adventure story as an antidote to Into Thin Air *and* The Perfect Storm."


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BENSON & HEDGES
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nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.
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A MOMENT OF PLEASURE
WITH THE 100MM CIGARETTE

MOONLIGHT & ROMANCE
BENSON & HEDGES



Reg. 15 mg "tar," 1.2 mg nicotine; Men. 15 mg "tar," 1.1 mg nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

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SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.



A MOMENT OF PLEASUR
WITH THE 100MM CIGARET

Vanities

Fashion-week events were not all spring-collection shows and club openings. A swarm of very social Buddhists gathered at Clementine for the release party of both the Tibetan Freedom Concert album and director Sara Pirozek's *Free Tibet* documentary, which was screened for a V.I.P. audience beforehand. More than 300 people packed the cavernous Art Deco restaurant, including Kate Moss and Naomi Campbell, fresh from the fashion runways. In other Buddhist-friendly literary circles, *V.F.* contributor Alex Shoumatoff—who has written extensively on the Dalai Lama—celebrated the publication of his history of the Southwest, *Legends of the American Desert,* at Elaine's. Also at Elaine's: the book party for *V.F.* contributor Heather Watts and Jock Soto's cookbook, *Our Meals: Making a Home for Family and Friends.* Further downtown, journalist and power hostess Sally Quinn was fêted at the Four Seasons for her book *The Party,* which will come in handy for those planning to entertain the likes of Katharine Graham, Tom Foley, David Brinkley, or Barry Goldwater in their own home. —RIZA CRUZ



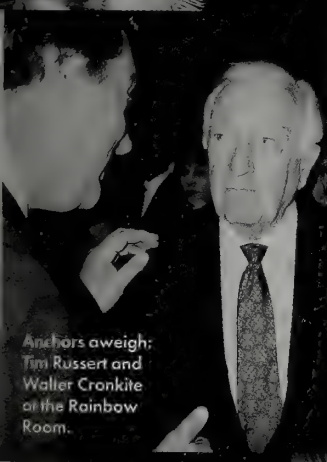
Making the Marc: Ingrid Casares, Madonna, and Marc Jacobs at Jacobs's spring-collection show at the New York State Armory.



Courtney Love gets the [illegible] treatment backstage at the VH1 Fashion Awards.



Shalom, Stella! Models Shalom Harlow and Stella Tennant at the Marc Jacobs show.



Anchors aweigh: Tim Russert and Walter Cronkite at the Rainbow Room.



High wattage: Ingrid Sischy and Heather Watts at Elaine's.

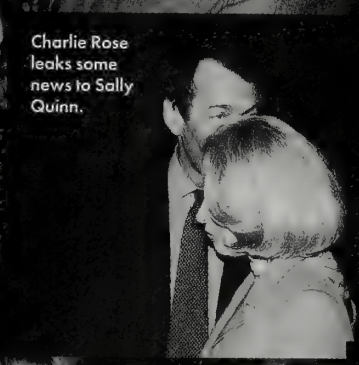


Damian Woetzel, Jock Soto, Calvin Klein, and Sandy Gallin celebrate Soto's cookbook, *Our Meals,* co-authored by Heather Watts.

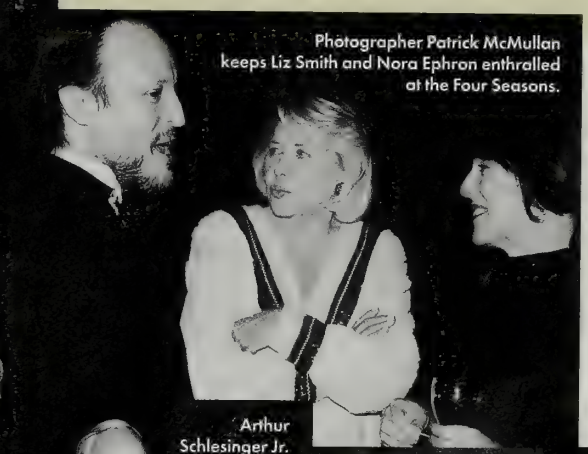
Camera

Tibet: Claire Danes, left, at Clementine.

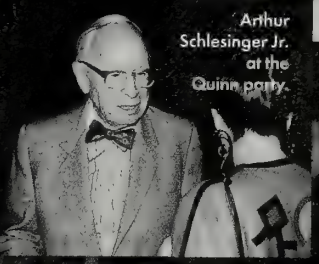




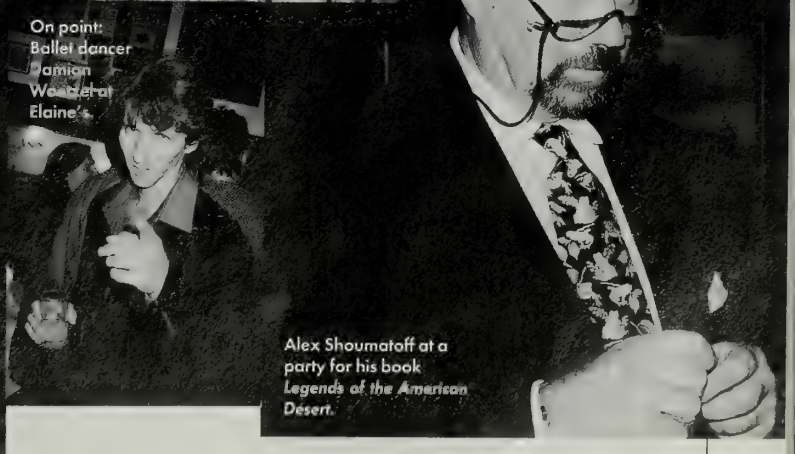
Charlie Rose leaks some news to Sally Quinn.



Photographer Patrick McMullan keeps Liz Smith and Nora Ephron enthralled at the Four Seasons.



Arthur Schlesinger Jr. at the Quinn party.



On point: Ballet dancer Damian Woetzel at Elaine's.

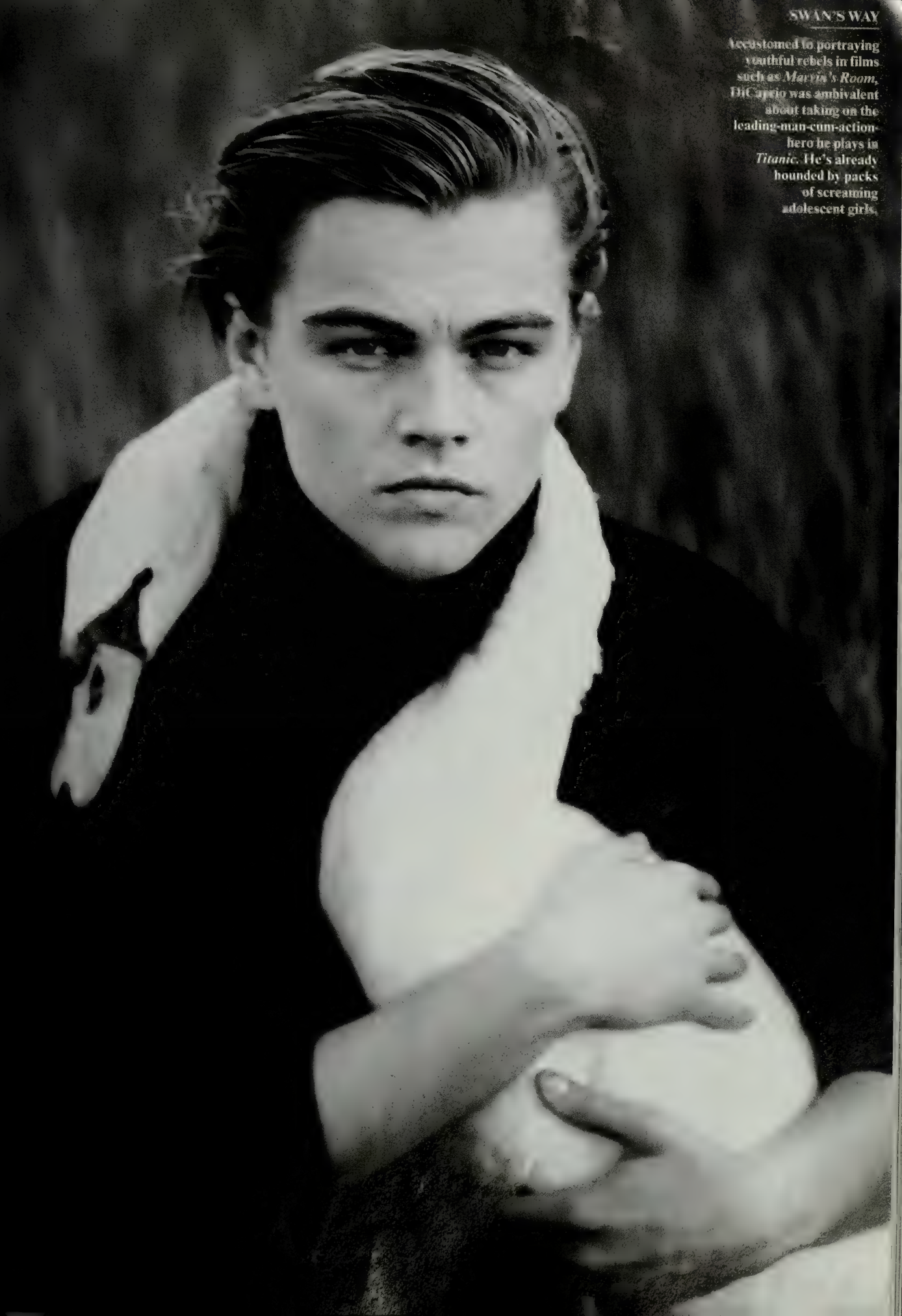
Alex Shoumatoff at a party for his book *Legends of the American Desert.*

VANITY FAIR
JANUARY 1998

Playing the hero of *Titanic*, James Cameron's monumental $200 million love-story-within-an-epic, Leonardo DiCaprio found himself hoisted on hydraulic cranes and, surrounded by 200 extras on bungee cords, flying above a 17-million-gallon water tank. Tracing DiCaprio's rise, CATHY HORYN squares the contradictions of a Hollywood heartthrob who still lives with his mother

LEONARDO TAKES WING

PHOTOGRAPHS [illegible] TZ · STYLED BY NICOLETTA SANTORO



SWAN'S WAY

Accustomed to portraying youthful rebels in films such as *Marvin's Room*, DiCaprio was ambivalent about taking on the leading-man-cum-action-hero he plays in *Titanic*. He's already hounded by packs of screaming adolescent girls.

Leonardo DiCaprio's epic year began down in the heat and gringo badlands of the Baja, where James Cameron filmed *Titanic,* his ultramarine romance, on 40 customized acres by the sea. *Titanic* is one big boat, a $200-million-plus, high-tech period piece, floated by two studios with a cast of a thousand, a 775-foot-long replica of the ship, and an open-air tank vast enough to capture the illusion of the ocean's calm—all at a cost likely to exceed not only that of *Waterworld* but the budgets of *Waterworld* and *Jurassic Park* combined.

To call Cameron's *Titanic,* which arrives this month, the most ambitious of the many screen depictions of that famously doomed vessel's iceberg encounter is to make minnow claims. And lest anyone conclude that the crew was lolling around in the Mexican sun or lapping up margaritas at the Rock 'n' Roll Taco just off Route 1, Cameron—the boss action director of Hollywood—drove his troops with the mania of the immortality-obsessed. The result is a spectacular achievement, a film that is intimate and grand, turbulent and beautiful, but—above all—breathtakingly realistic. When DiCaprio's character, dressed in dazzling white-tie, spirits his wealthy new love to steerage for a rambunctious evening that ends in the backseat of a stored Rolls, he becomes a star of the first order and the exuberant heart of the picture.

But how was Leo to know? When he arrived in Rosarito, he had already spent four months in Mexico shooting [illegible] *Romeo and Juli-* [illegible] No. 1 on the [illegible] audacious [illegible] those romantic looks—[illegible] isage, and drooping blond forelock—which have made him catnip to budding teenage girls. But in Rosarito, the 23-year-old star and inveterate complainer was seriously considering whether next time he ought to factor in a film's location before signing.

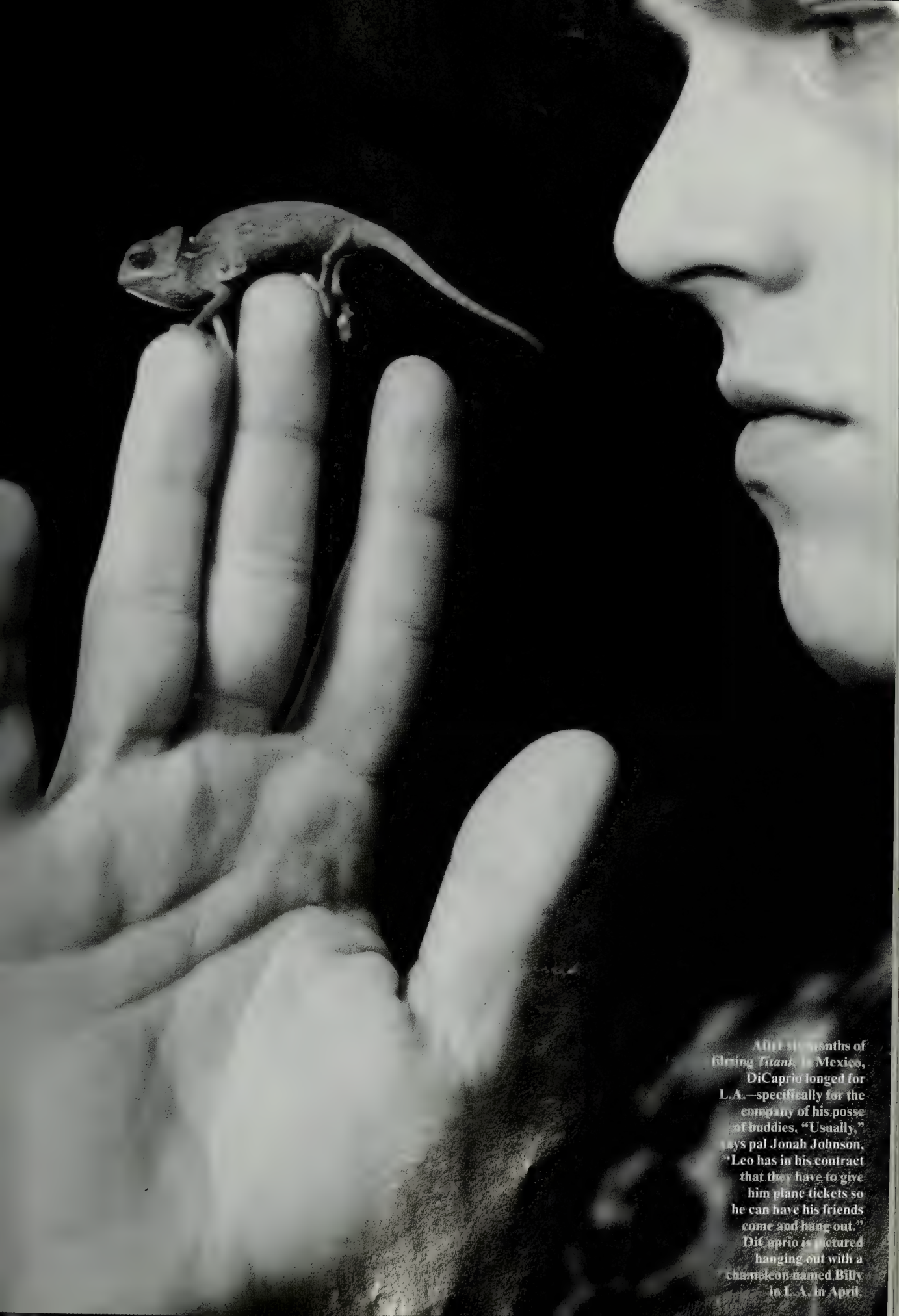
"Botswana? *Fine,*" he'd say. "But I was in Mexico too long." He was sick of the brown land, the mariachi merriment, and Cameron's big tub. Even more fatiguing was the endless drone of how *Titanic* would catapult him, a baby-cheeked rebel who barely shaves, to the status of leading man. And though he admired Cameron, and liked his role as the cocky artist who steals co-star Kate Winslet's waterproof heart, DiCaprio instinctively saw himself as someone other than a big-time, big-budget star who could be hailed on street corners by just . . . *Leo!*

His reservations didn't sink as work-weeks hit the 70-hour mark and he bobbed through the water scenes he had detested from the moment he first edged catlike into the tank. He missed his life back in L.A. and his gang—the witty Jonah Johnson and actors Tobey Maguire, Kevin Connelly, Vincent Laresca, Dash Mihok, and Ethan Suplee. He missed the horseplay—"you know, normal adolescent high jinks," as Suplee says.

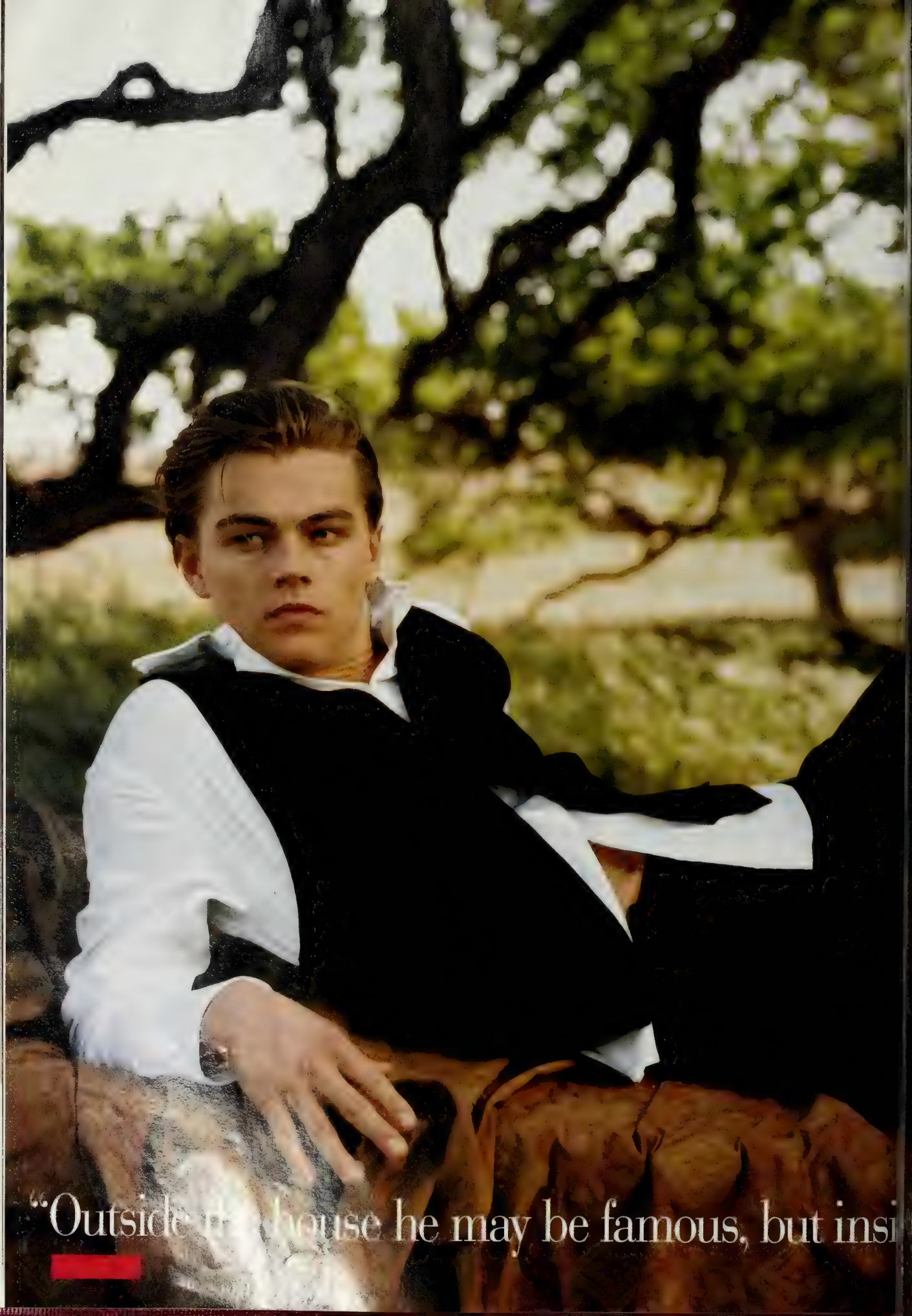
And so with the same dedicated fondness for comfort and raillery as Dean Martin—who had steaks dispatched from the Sands in Vegas while making *The Sons of Katie Elder* in Durango—DiCaprio flew in his homeys. "Usually, Leo has in his contract that they have to give him x number of plane tickets so he can have his friends come and hang out," Jonah Johnson says. Johnson, DiCaprio's assistant for the movie, recalls the day he ambled over to the set, took a good look at the four soundstages, the 17-million-gallon water tank, the smokestacks rising majestically against the sky, the hordes of extras running around in period clothes . . . and thought, This is bullshit.

DiCaprio would have chosen a different word (at least with a reporter) to describe the scene, but how could he help but be concerned? All his en-

"Little does Leo know what's going to happen when *Titanic* comes out.



After six months of filming *Titanic* in Mexico, DiCaprio longed for L.A.—specifically for the company of his posse of buddies. "Usually," says pal Jonah Johnson, "Leo has in his contract that they have to give him plane tickets so he can have his friends come and hang out." DiCaprio is pictured hanging out with a chameleon named Billy in L.A. in April.


"Outside
house he may be famous, but insi



IN CHARACTER

As Jack, *Titanic*'s exuberant male lead, DiCaprio romances Kate Winslet and faces perils at sea. He detested the water scenes, protesting to director James Cameron each time he had to take a leap off dry land.

SHIRT BY PRADA; PANTS AND WAISTCOAT BY JEAN-PAUL GAULTIER HOMME; SHOES BY JEFFREY WEST; DAYBED BY BOUNTIFUL; FOR DETAILS SEE CREDITS PAGE

just Leo the jerk."

trancing qualities—the brashness, the sweet adolescent awkwardness—were about to be given heroic dimension and Hollywood spin . . . *love, innocence, the perils of the sea.* DiCaprio, who had confined himself mainly to playing oddballs and misfits in movies such as *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* and last year's *Marvin's Room,* was ambivalent about being seen as "a young Gary Cooper" (Cameron's take on DiCaprio's character, Jack Dawson). At the wrap party in March, Winslet presented him with a thick thermal blanket, in which he buried himself. "After the whole experience," he says now, "I know it's *really* not my cup of tea—all respect to Jim and the actors who do that type of thing."

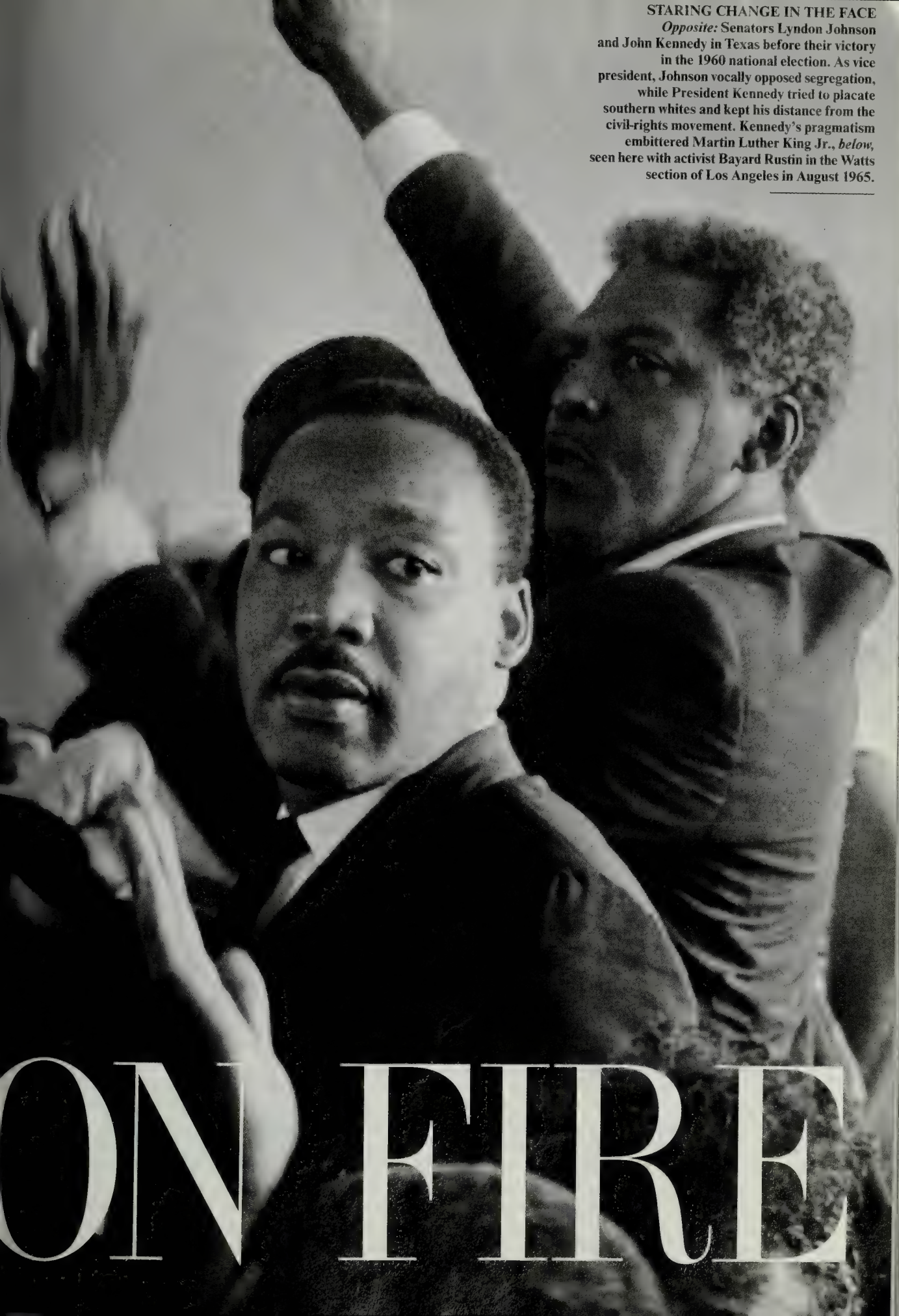
In April, DiCaprio flew to Paris for the dual role of Louis XIV and his brother, Philippe, in Randall Wallace's remake of the Dumas classic *The Man in the Iron Mask,* with a cast including Jeremy Irons, John Malkovich, and Gérard Depardieu. Splendid company—and DiCaprio liked the feeling of returning to familiar territory, playing not one but two extreme characters. The homeboys—Tobey, Ethan, and Jonah—arrived. They partied and hung out with models whom Leo knew from backstage tours of fashion shows. There was sharp banter, and DiCaprio—a mean mimic—perfected a devastating impression of Wallace's southern pone. ("Um gonna kick your ass, but fuhst um gonna tell yuh a story about my daddy.")

But it was obvious to all that DiCaprio's days of casually protecting his anonymity with pulled-down baseball caps were numbered. He had already been chased from the Louvre by 30 squealing girls, who tried to claw the shirt off his back right near the *Mona Lisa.* Now, as if guided by some mysterious hormonal radar, they were outside his apartment near the Champs-Élysées. Sometimes Jonah Johnson would open a window, look down at their honest, trembling, Polly Magoo faces, and throw water on them. "They *loved* it," swears Johnson. If they were like any of the countless girls who come up to his *Romeo and Juliet* costar Claire Danes just to touch a hand that touched his, CONTINUED ON PAGE 128



Following the Kennedy assassination, as Lyndon Johnson rallied his forces behind a historic civil-rights bill, Martin Luther King Jr.'s battle for equality gathered strength across the South. In an excerpt from *Pillar of Fire*, the follow-up to his Pulitzer Prize–winning *Parting the Waters*, TAYLOR BRANCH re-creates the drama of the struggle and the spirits of its warriors: F.B.I. director J. Edgar Hoover, the blueblood firebrand Mary Peabody, and a courageous seamstress, Georgia Reed, who carried its greatest hopes

HEARTS



STARING CHANGE IN THE FACE
Opposite: Senators Lyndon Johnson and John Kennedy in Texas before their victory in the 1960 national election. As vice president, Johnson vocally opposed segregation, while President Kennedy tried to placate southern whites and kept his distance from the civil-rights movement. Kennedy's pragmatism embittered Martin Luther King Jr., *below,* seen here with activist Bayard Rustin in the Watts section of Los Angeles in August 1965.

ON FIRE

here comes a time, there even comes a moment, in the affairs of men when they sense their lives are being altered forever.... We are experiencing a revolution.

—Frank McGee,
NBC News, September 1963.

Reporters banged through the doors of the Dallas Trade Mart, desperate to locate the president. Finding no clues in the stares of the 2,000 guests awaiting John Kennedy's arrival at the Democratic fund-raiser, one journalist called the office of Hearst Newspapers in New York and drove the press out of the hall with the shout "Parkland Hospital!" An observer would recall the surreal perception of fear and awe "moving across that crowd like a wind over a wheatfield." A companion of federal district judge Sarah Hughes's cried tears of apprehension, even before the rumor of gunshots reached their table.

Outside Parkland, a disembodied voice announced, "The president of the United States is dead—I repeat . . . " just as Tom Wicker of *The New York Times* ran by the vice president's limousine, which was parked askew. Nearby, a dark cloud of Secret Service men hurriedly shoved Lyndon Johnson into an unmarked car and headed for Love Field, careening past stop signs as agents shouted orders. Johnson and his wife, Lady Bird, boarded Air Force One just ahead of Judge Hughes, who would administer the presidential oath.

On that November night, Johnson called national leaders. "Just *think, think, think,*" he urged Supreme Court justice Arthur Goldberg, pleading for advice on how to "unite the country . . . because if it starts falling to pieces . . . why, we could deteriorate pretty quick."

[Not since the Civil War had the United States seen the kind of violent domestic upheaval that marked the months before the assassination. Inspired by the work of Negro preachers and activists, the civil-rights movement had started to draw national attention during the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955–56, when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Negroes in that Alabama city labored for nearly a year to keep buses empty to protest segregation. Next came the 1957 crisis surrounding the integration of schools in Little Rock, Arkansas. Sit-ins or lunch-counter protests followed in North Carolina, Nashville, and Atlanta. During the bloody Freedom Rides throughout the South, activists attempting to integrate interstate buses braved attacks by white vigilantes. For nearly a decade there had been increasingly dangerous racial hostilities.

In a moment of false quiet before the culmination, in Alabama, of the siege of Birmingham, the battle over civil rights for Negroes flared elsewhere. The newest front was the Florida city of St. Augustine—the first permanent outpost of European culture on North American soil—as its 400th birthday approached.]

On March 11, eight months before the assassination, Vice President Lyndon Johnson, floating above a sea of ancient palms, waved expansively from the balcony of one of St. Augustine's restored Spanish mansions. The vice president was in town to help promote the quadricentennial festivities. He was not greeted by picketing Negroes, thanks to his aide George Reedy, who had mediated a truce of sorts with Fannie Fullerwood.

Fullerwood, the upright daughter of a railroad worker, was a maid who had become the president of her local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.). She hoped to integrate the quadricentennial commission, and had written the vice president asking that he withhold $350,000 in federal funds for the celebration on the grounds that the city still maintained legal segreg tion. She had given three formal rea ings of drafts of her letter at N.A.A.C. board meetings and had consulted well with a Negro-college president make certain that the language she cho was courteous and absolutely correc

Johnson had responded only da before his visit, assuring her that "i event I participate in while in St. A gustine will be segregated."

City officials, eager to avoid pic eting, attempted—for Johnson's sake to create the impression of conciliatic They specified that Negroes regist ing as "guests," rather than as payi ticket holders, might attend the ba quet for the vice president. This i timidated some Negroes who had hop to attend. Katherine Twine, a postma wife, was ready to go, but lost her ner took off her dress, and asked her hu band to escort Fullerwood.

At the dinner, two tables of Negroes including Fullerwood and Robert Ha ling, a dentist who headed the N.A.A.C Youth Council—were greeted by the vi president. The next day's newspape however, reviewing the ceremonies lavish detail, made no mention of t integration of the festivities; no pre dents had been set in St. Augustine

Local white interest in compromi evaporated as soon as Johnson to flight. When the nine-person N.A.A.C delegation filed into the City Comm sion chamber the next morning for appointment arranged as part of th agreement with George Reedy, th encountered a tape recorder on an em ty table. A city employee instructed th to leave recorded complaints for t commissioners, who found themsel unable to attend.

Nonplussed, the Negroes took tu leaning toward the machine. The R erend J. H. McKissick mentioned t "colored" signs still up at the cou house and the city's yacht pier. Cly Jenkins, a barber, protested the c finement of Negroes to menial jobs city employment. Robert Hayling ask for ordinary courtesy at the offices the water department, the coron and other public agencies. J. E. Pr tor, a carpenter, seconded this po by recalling that when his sister di and his family sought a death cert cate, "we had to stand on the outs to give the information they want and I did not think that was fair.

Excerpted from *Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years, 1963–65*, by Taylor Branch, to be published in February by Simon & Schuster; © 1998 by the author.

s cold and raining. We are human
e everybody else, and try to do right."
Two months later, Fannie Fullerwood
uld advise President Kennedy by let-
that still there was no response to
tape recording, nor fulfillment of
mises made to Johnson. "Since St.
gustine is the nation's oldest city,"
wrote, "we feel that democracy
uld have had its inception here, but
sn't even practiced here as late as
3." President Kennedy did not reply.
In mid-July, Hayling deployed his
uth Council on picket lines outside
Augustine's segregated lunch coun-
. A local judge, Charles Mathis, sent
en demonstrators under the age of
to the county jail. After five days,
this offered to release the prisoners
heir parents guaranteed, in writing,
t the juveniles would forsake racial
test until the age of 21. Four fami-
refused, and Mathis declared that two
s and two girls be held indefinitely.
On August 28, less than three months
ore Oswald's shots, the March on
shington—featuring an address by the
year-old Martin Luther King—de-
d expectations and raised buried
es. Beforehand, *Life* had declared
t the capital was suffering "its worst
e of invasion jitters since the First
tle of Bull Run." The Pentagon read-
19,000 troops; hospitals made room.
Yet, to the surprise of those unfa-
iar with Reverend King's dedica-
n to Gandhi's theories of nonviolent
stance, the occasion's quarter-million
ticipants, most in their Sunday best,
aved with dignity. Police made only
r arrests, all of whites. Like many
ite Americans who didn't attend
vement rallies, President Kennedy
rd a complete speech by King for
first time that day. It was an ad-
ss marked by inspiration; when
g wandered off his prepared text,
pel singer Mahalia Jackson piped
as if in church, "Tell 'em about the
am, Martin."
Starting anew, speaking extempora-
usly, King carried the emotions of
audience higher and higher, to an
onishing crescendo: "I still have a
am," he cried, "a dream deeply root-
in the American Dream. . . . I have
dream that one day every valley
ll be exalted."
n St. Augustine, however, dreams
e way to waking rage. On Labor
y, just after the great march, re-





EXIT THE KING
J. Edgar Hoover's lies about King's Communist alliances gained acceptance—as was made clear by a billboard, *top,* near Selma, Alabama, in 1965. *Above:* King leaves a December 1964 meeting with the F.B.I. director after an attempt to resolve animosities made public when King demanded that Hoover produce evidence of his allegations of subversion.

sentment over the still-incarcerated students boiled up into the city's first large-scale demonstration. More than 100 adults carried integration placards into the old Slave Market. Police arrested 27, including Hayling.

Just two Sundays later, on September 15, Birmingham exploded when dynamite obliterated the stone staircase of a Negro church, Sixteenth Street Baptist, and blew a large hole in the eastern wall. The sanctuary clock stopped at 10:22 A.M. Flying brick and glass destroyed a bathroom where four adolescent girls, wearing white for the special occasion, were preparing to lead the annual Youth Day worship service. Seconds later, a dazed man emerged, clutching a dress shoe from the foot of his 11-year-old granddaughter, one of four mangled corpses in the rubble.

The girl's mother, Maxine McNair, a schoolteacher, had been searching for her child when she came upon her father. "Daddy, I can't find Denise," she yelled out. "She's dead, baby," he cried as he glimpsed his daughter's face. "I'd like to blow the whole town up," he screamed.

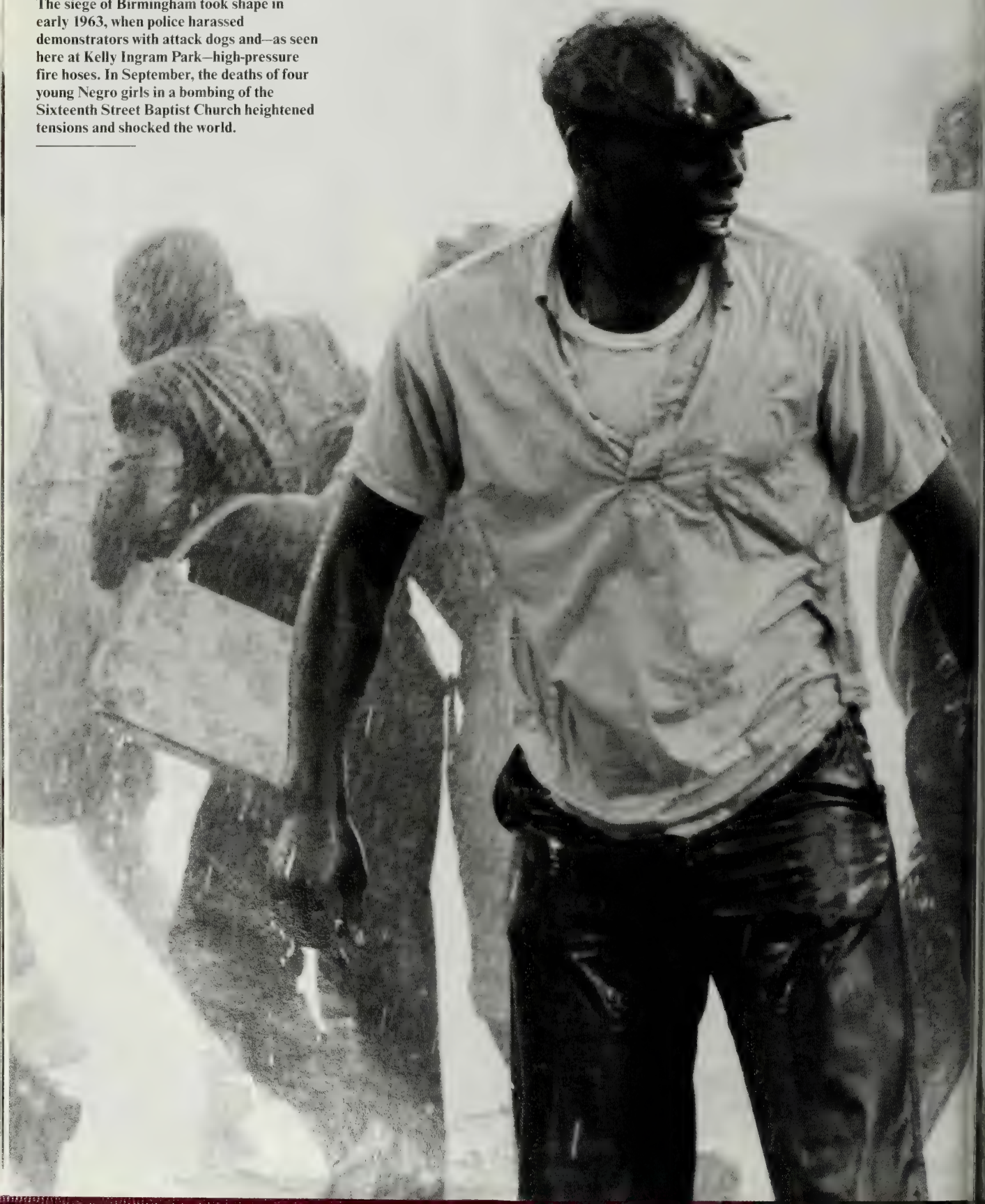
To help keep the peace, President Kennedy sent Burke Marshall, his assistant attorney general, into Birmingham, a city on the verge of open warfare. A Negro boy had been killed already, shot off the bicycle he was riding by a white Eagle Scout. Guns were brandished on many street corners.

In St. Augustine, on the day of the funerals in Alabama, Robert Hayling called television stations to urge coverage of that night's Ku Klux Klan meeting and proposed to allies that they infiltrate the rally themselves. He con-

"We will expose King as an immoral opportunist," pledged the F.B.I.

"I'd like to blow the whole town up," a man cri

FOR THE UNION DEAD
The siege of Birmingham took shape in early 1963, when police harassed demonstrators with attack dogs and—as seen here at Kelly Ingram Park—high-pressure fire hoses. In September, the deaths of four young Negro girls in a bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church heightened tensions and shocked the world.



Birmingham exploded.



vinced only three N.A.A.C.P. activists.

They drove slowly to the rally, which was being held in a large clearing off the highway, behind a bowling alley. Pausing indecisively, Hayling turned onto a dirt road as a car pulled up behind him and a man with a shotgun jumped out and took the Negroes captive.

Meanwhile, a crowd of 300 had gathered for the ceremonial burning of a 20-foot cross and an address by a celebrity Klansman, the Reverend Connie Lynch of California, chief spokesman of the National States Rights Party. Lynch had arrived in his custom coral Cadillac, wearing his trademark string tie. He dismissed the Birmingham bombing, stating that the girls had been "old enough to have venereal diseases" and were no more human than rattlesnakes. "So I kill 'em all," he said, "and if it's four less niggers tonight, then . . . we're all better off." Turning to local politics, Lynch denounced Hayling as a "burr-headed bastard" and challenged his audience to "kill him before sunup."

As the cry of "Niggers! Niggers!" electrified the steamy darkness, Lynch scrambled for his rifle. Poked with knives, menaced with guns, Hayling and his companions were led to the center of the platform. When a search of wallets identified Hayling as "the nigger who wants to be king," cries of murderous bravado swelled. Klansmen swaggered, but their threats dissipated into an eerie lull in which, for an instant, time seemed to stop. The stillness was broken finally by Klan women urging the hesitant enforcers to action with piercing shrieks. Finally, the men darted in, tearing away pieces of shirts and striking with fists, chains, and clubs.

A shotgun blast from an excited Klansman scattered attackers as sheriff's deputies arrived. Abrasions, concussions, and broken teeth sent the Negroes to the hospital, yet authorities prosecuted the victims along with the Klansmen. Charges against the whites were dismissed, but a jury convicted Hayling of assault.

The mood of foreboding blanketing the nation had turned incendiary that



THE SIEGE OF AN ANCIENT CITY
In March of 1964 in St. Augustine, Florida—the oldest city in America—Boston Brahmin Mary Peabody, *left,* was arrested in segregation protests. Mother of the Massachusetts governor, wife of a prominent Episcopal leader, Peabody was the cousin of former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.



Some protest events in St. Augustine were centered at the Monson Motor Lodge, *right,* where picketers remained active in July 1964. A month before, the motel's manager, *below,* dumped a jug labeled "muriatic acid" into the pool where integrationists attempted to swim.



"You will never see the day when people are forced to take others into their hearts."

summer and caught fire by fall. "I have kept silence," thundered King to his Southern Christian Leadership Conference (S.C.L.C.) in Richmond, Virginia, on September 27. "I did this because I was naïve enough to believe that proof of good faith would emerge. It is now obvious to me that this was a mistake." He spoke of the bombs and promises broken, accusing the president of mistaking the great march for an end, not a beginning.

"They could have made no bigger mistake," he roared. "We are more determined than ever that nonviolence is the way. Let them bring on their bombs. Let them sabotage us with the evil of cooperation with segregation. *We intend to be free.* . . . I serve notice tonight that *I will return to Birmingham!*"

F.B.I. director J. Edgar Hoover was Johnson's first business caller on the morning after Kennedy's assassination, Saturday, November 23, 1963. He reported that the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle found in the Texas School Book Depository had been traced to a buyer named A. J. Hidell, whose Dallas post-office box had been rented by Lee Harvey Oswald, the suspect in custody. Hoover appeared perplexed when Johnson mentioned reports that Oswald, a former expatriate to the U.S.S.R., had visited the Soviet Embassy in Mexico two months ear

That evening, economist W Heller, who chaired the Counc Economic Advisers, joined the sol procession to the new president. J son begged the economist's patie saying he was not as sophisticate his predecessor. When Heller re ed the number of points the ma had dropped in the wake of Da he noticed that, before he himself c speak further, his new boss had culated the loss at 3 percent. He repeating the details of the eco ic report he had given Kennedy days earlier, failed to mention dler John Kennedy Jr.'s forcing and stiff national-security adviser George Bundy to eat imaginary s of cherry-vanilla pie off his pl tea set. But he could not escape memory himself.

Since Kennedy's move to lowe rates, Heller's staff had pushed fo initiative to offset the fact that benefits of the cut would flow ma to the wealthy. For Heller, it was pulsive to mention his concept of po ty workshops, and he was surpr by the reaction. "That's my kind of gram," Johnson exclaimed, immedi all fired up. "Push ahead full tilt

The president often recalled wa ing—as a young teacher in Cot Texas—hungry Mexican children c discarded grapefruit rinds. His pr est moment as a congressman had c in 1939, when his federal co-op ect lit 90 percent of the farms in Texas Hill Country with their electricity, lifting eons of toil. was the purpose of government, J son told Heller, forcefully grabb his arm and announcing himself close, as a Roosevelt New Deale

The next morning, as Black the riderless funeral horse esco Kennedy's casket through miles American regrets to the Capitol tunda, Johnson attended service St. Mark's Episcopal Church, w the Reverend Bill Baxter urged congregation to allow the shock of assassination to dissolve insignific selfish divisions and strengthen bonds uniting all the humans of earth. Visibly moved, Johnson cov his face with his handkerchief du "America, the Beautiful." Afterw the president walked spontaneo

) the parish hall, seeming to find ef in the contact of shaking hands. agitated Secret Service detail prac-lly dragged Johnson to his car min-s before a voice cried out, "Jesus ist, they've shot Oswald." Millions just witnessed the first live, tele-d murder. But the new president little time to absorb the news.

After lunch, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, home from Vietnam, met with Johnson and foreign-policy leaders. He began by flatly denying that the U.S. had n involved in the coup, three weeks ier, against South Vietnamese pres-nt Diem. His evident satisfaction, vever, indicated otherwise.

Although Lodge did not work for C.I.A., Johnson—who remained for-l and cool—associated him with agency's patrician stalwarts, men considered an assemblage of over-d, mediocre dissemblers. ("When-r those rich people have a son y can't trust with the family bro-age," Johnson grumbled, "they ship down to the C.I.A.")

ohnson's late-evening phone calls uded one of thanks to Martin Luther g for his statements urging public n after the assassination. King told nson that the pending civil-rights act uld be "one of the greatest trib-;" to Kennedy's memory, and the ual strangers spoke with an intimacy mmon to the crisis. (King: "Re-ds to the family." Johnson: "Thank so much, Martin.")

On the day before Thanksgiving, nson delivered an address ac-med as nearly perfect to a joint ion of Congress. A *New York Times* ic noted Kennedy themes, but the iments of the speech would have n too basic for the new presi-t's predecessor. Urging citizens t to turn about and linger over evil moment," Johnson denounced te and evil and violence," linking motivation behind the assassina-with emotions nurturing racial , and emphasizing the healing ssity of passing the civil-rights bill. hyr Wright, the Johnson family's ro cook, watched from the gallery. eavens to Betsy," she told reporters, "I don't give my age out.")

Over the Thanksgiving weekend, White House political director Lawrence O'Brien stressed to Johnson that unless the stranglehold of the House Rules Committee, led by Representative Howard Smith of Virginia, could be broken, the civil-rights bill would never reach the House floor.

The president hoped to dislodge the bill by arguing publicly that Republicans of conscience must help rescue it from Rules and vote, at minimum, for consideration by the full House. "God almighty," Johnson told Representative Carl Albert of Oklahoma, "I don't see how California and Chicago can stand up against civil rights." He practiced his strategy selectively, but with conviction. "Say to the Republicans, 'You're either the party of Lincoln or you ain't.'"

Simultaneously, the president attempted to restore public trust diminished since Dallas. With Hoover, he pretended to oppose a national commission of inquiry into the assassination. Privately, however, Johnson suggested that the director's true goal was to head off any independent review of the F.B.I. investigation. Johnson warned Senator Richard Russell of Georgia about multiple, runaway investigations, hinting that hearings in the House would endanger national secrets, and adding that state investigations in Texas would exacerbate raw sectional conflicts.

Five hours later, Johnson called Russell again, swiftly reading a statement naming the national assassination commission. The old senator fairly howled when he heard his own name just after Chief Justice Earl Warren's.

"I couldn't serve on it with Warren," he gasped. "*I don't like that man.*"

Johnson came right back. "You're *my* man on that commission, and don't tell me what you can do and what you can't," he shouted. "Because I can't arrest you, and I'm not going to put the F.B.I. on you, but you're goddamned sure going to serve."

This was followed by a cascade of endearments. ("Nobody ever has been more to me than you have, Dick, except my mother. . . . I haven't got any daddy, and you're going to be it.") Finally the fuming Russell began to laugh.

Although Hoover did not reject similar entreaties from Johnson, he took it as an affront that the F.B.I.'s conclusions would not suffice. He described the Warren Commission as "the proposed group they are trying to get to study my report."

In Atlanta, Martin Luther King preached on Thanksgiving at Ebenezer Baptist. To Paul Good, of ABC, the minister's mere passing reference to the cataclysmic loss of the president seemed insufficient. Making no effort to soothe national grief, King preached on slavery.

Throughout the history of their relationship, King had identified with Kennedy, studying his oratorical skills, assuming the code name "JFK" in Birmingham, and consistently attempting to understand the political pressures separating the president from the movement. King, who had long ago braced himself for the martyr's fate that had come so unexpectedly to Kennedy, was hurt not to have been invited to the funeral Mass. He stood alone and unrecognized among the sidewalk crowds who watched the silent passage of the funeral cortège.

Few observers fully comprehended the depth or subtlety of the tensions between the leaders. Some experts had already concluded that Kennedy had won in 1960 by shrewdly publicizing his minor attention to King's wife, Coretta, when her husband was imprisoned—on the eve of the national elections—in a rural Georgia jail where, for Negroes, a day's sentence could be a death sentence. (A pamphlet about a carefully calibrated call made by Kennedy to Coretta was distributed at Negro churches on the Sunday before the presidential vote.)

Since his victory, however, the president had, time and again, tested King's faith in his instinct for equality, distancing the tired and disappointed minister further and further as he weighed his every utterance on race against the loyalty of a "Solid South" crucial to his re-election. On January 1, 1963—exactly one century after the effective date of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation—Kennedy had dashed King's hopes for a

historic proclamation to abolish some part of segregation by executive order, which King had argued for privately, but insistently, for two years.

Within days of the missed deadline, in a talk with his advisers, King had declared his patience with Kennedy utterly exhausted. There was, he had concluded, no alliance to be made. King had reached his turning point.

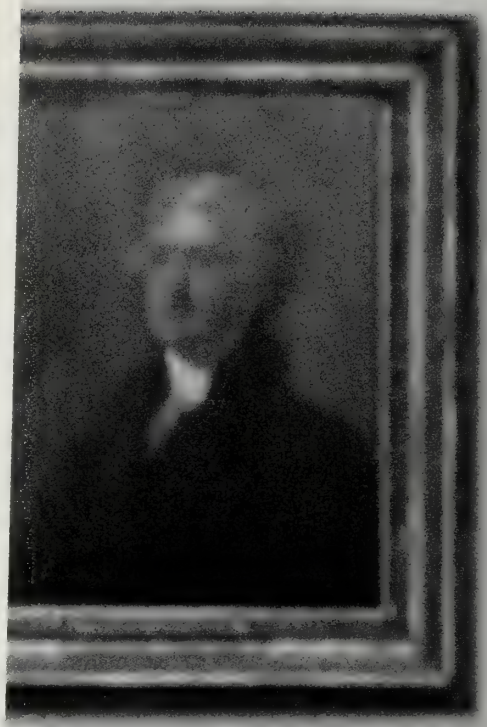
Wyatt Walker, the Negro leader's chief assistant, had presented a blueprint for the staged assault on Birmingham, and King embraced the public drama of a showdown. The normally cautious leader would seize the initiative for the first time, seeking to apply lessons accumulated since the Montgomery bus boycott. King believed, as he warned, that "some of the people sitting here will not come back alive."

In the months after the assassination, not only was King suffering the recriminations of those who blamed him for Birmingham, he was also enduring a bad phase of his tumultuous relationship with Attorney General Robert Kennedy, the late president's brother. In a particularly galling outgrowth of the 1962 civil-rights campaign in Albany, Georgia, federal prosecutors—who had ignored entreaties to punish or prevent flagrant violence against the movement—had managed to indict nine of its leaders on federal conspiracy charges.

King had personally asked the Justice Department to review the cases, but a post-assassination letter from the grieving attorney general defended the prosecution as racially impartial. "I trust that the information within will satisfy your concern," Kennedy advised.

King had been warned repeatedly that Kennedy's people at Justice were having a hard time getting the F.B.I. to move on behalf of voter-registration workers against powerful southern interests. It was all but impossible as long as Hoover continued his campaign to brand King and some of his associates as Communist sympathizers.

King had no notion that one of the strongest forces driving the F.B.I. against him was CONTINUED ON PAGE 137



JUST SAY IT STRAIGHT
Senator Richard Russell, *far right,* a Georgia Democrat, had been Johnson's mentor and later served as his man on the Warren Commission. They clashed on the Civil Rights Act, which Russell thought would decimate southern Democrats. They are seen in the Cabinet Room of the White House.

"I haven't got any daddy,"
L.B.J. told Dick Russell, "and
you're going to be it."



PARIS

Starting with a single-table dinner for 400
Versailles, moving to the lily-filled Bourges cathedr
and ending up at a 1,200-guest lunch
the Château de Menetou, European nobs a
nobles and New York's Concorde set sp
three days celebrating the marriage of Prin
and Duke Pierre d'Arenberg and
aristocratic beauty Silvia de Castella
From the gun-wielding guar
to the private train and helicopte
BOB COLACELLO captu
the manic extravagance o
$1.7 million movable fe



PHS BY JONATHAN BECKER

MATCH



Prince and Duke Pierre d'Arenberg and Silvia de Castellane, with young members of their wedding party, arrive from the Cathedral of Bourges at the reception in the d'Arenberg family's Château de Menetou, *opposite,* hung with the flag of the family's colors, red and gold. The bride's gown, with a 25-foot train embroidered in India, was designed for her by Oscar de la Renta for Balmain.

"I was going to wear my diamond ring, too," Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah of Kuwait told Lady Rothermere, who was showing off a 30-plus-carat diamond ring with her tartan-plaid day dress by Alexander McQueen for Givenchy. "But in the car on the way from Paris, São Schlumberger gave me a lecture about never wearing diamonds *before* five, so I switched to my emerald." The cousin of the emir of Kuwait and the Korean-born second wife of the English press lord Vere Rothermere were two of the 1,200 guests at the wedding lunch of His Serene Highness the Prince and Duke Pierre d'Arenberg and Silvia de Castellane—the culmination of a $1.7 million, three-day, high-society performance piece staged in four different locations in France this past October. The Paris papers billed it as the wedding of the decade. One bedraggled Brazilian socialite, having made her way from Paris to Versailles to the towns of Bourges and Menetou and back, pronounced it "social torture." The golden couple's gift registry was also daunting: Asprey and Porthault.

"Pierre has always been a bit extravagant," says a friend of the 36-year-old groom, whose Holy Roman Empire title can be traced back to the fifth century. "Just like his mother." His mother, the late Peggy Bedford Bancroft d'Arenberg d'Uzès, a Standard Oil heiress from Philadelphia, "was the epitome of the social party girl," according to one of her great pals, man-about-Paris Jimmy Douglas. "Always impeccably dressed, always smiling, laughing, giggling. She thought it was her duty to be an upper." Another friend [illegible] entire collection of couturier Jean Dessis, "wear six dresses, and give the rest to friends. S[illegible]

The Cathedral of Bourges, where 1,200 guests witnessed the two-hour, trilingual ceremony.



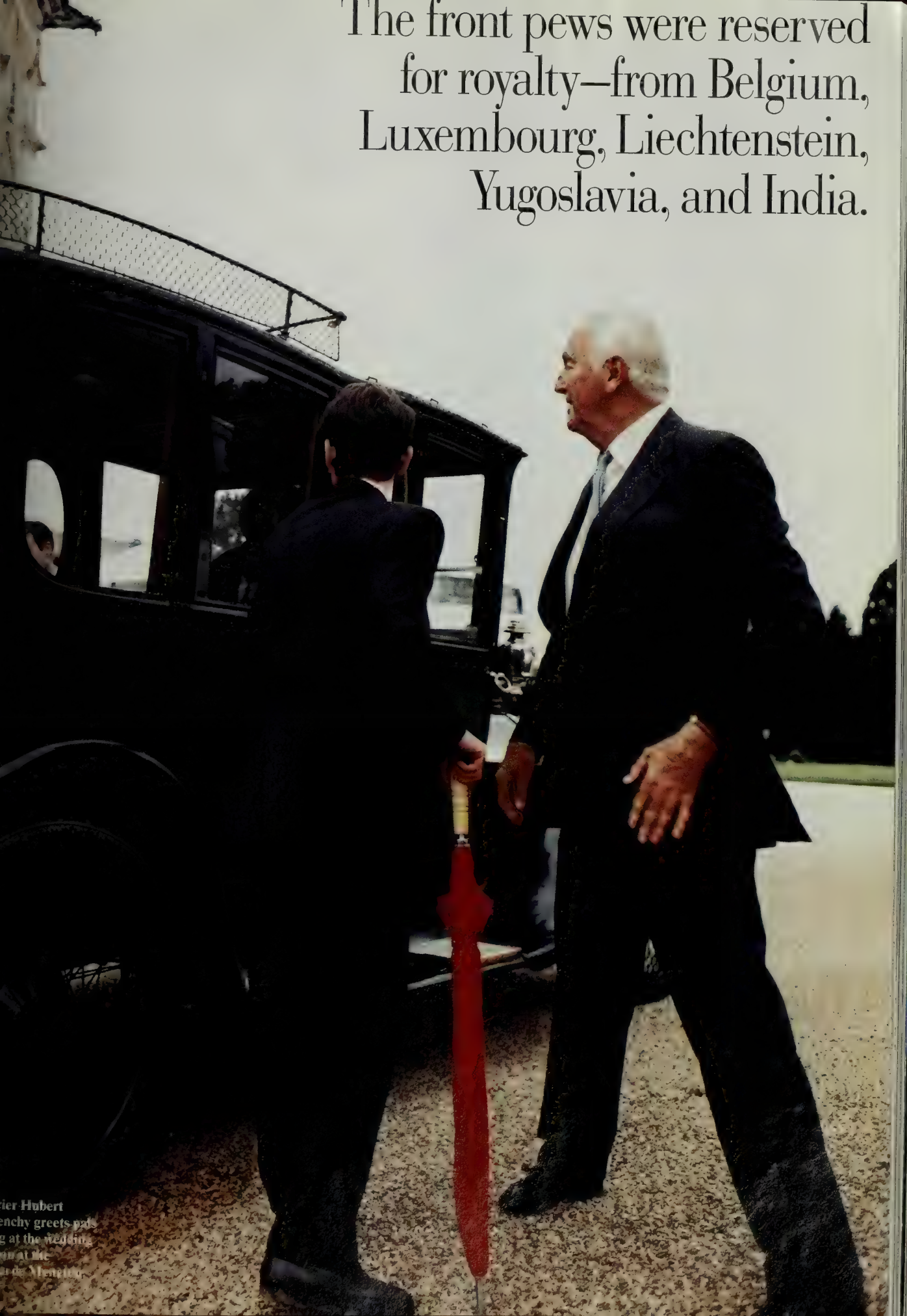
Horn players heralded the arrival of the groom at the cathedral.





Ladies in hats and men in swallow-tailed cutaways gather outside the cathedral.

The front pews were reserved for royalty—from Belgium, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Yugoslavia, and India.



ier Hubert
enchy greets pals
g at the wedding
on at the
r de Ménilles

generosity. She was Lady Brett, in a way." Douglas remembers seeing her last at Régine's, being showered with diamonds by diplomats from the Central African Empire. She was married three times: to New York banker Thomas Bancroft; to Prince Charles d'Arenberg, who died when Pierre was a child; and, finally, to the Duke d'Uzès, the premier duke of France. When she died in 1977, at age 44, in a car accident returning from a dinner dance outside Paris, one French newspaper declared, "As far as the social scene is concerned, the star on top of the Christmas tree has gone out."

The bride, a 30-year-old French beauty whose father's family was ennobled in the ninth century, also has party-giving in her blood. Her maternal grandmother, Beatriz Patiño, whose second husband was the late Bolivian tin king Antenor Patiño, was one of the reigning hostesses of the original jet set. The Patiño Ball, given in Estoril, Portugal, in 1968, rivaled the legendary Rothschild balls of the same era. With his epic wedding, Pierre d'Arenberg, who oversaw every detail from the design of the wedding gown to the seating of the wedding lunch, laid claim to being the host with the most in both families, past and present.



Wedding guests on the private train from Paris to Bourges.



Princess Ariana Habsburg and Countess Maximilian Bismarck.

Bourges townspeople wait for a glimpse of the bridal procession.

Julio Santo Domi and Lucy Ferry.



The festivities began in the Palace of Versailles on Thursday night, October 9, with a three-act, black-tie gala. The guest list was limited to 400 friends and relatives who had traveled from abroad, including Infanta Elena of Spain, Princess Caroline of Monaco and Prince Ernst of Hanover, Prince Pavlos and Princess Marie-Chantal of Greece, Prince Frederick of Kent, the Duchess of Seville, and what one jester called "the Concorde Frequent Fliers' Club"—Nan Kempner, Lynn Wyatt, and Georgette Mosbacher. (A handful of Parisians managed to slip in, led by the bride's favorite shoe designer, the oh-so-social Christian Louboutin.) First there was a concert in the Royal Chapel by the Erato Chamber Or[illegible] of Germany

Servants in 18th-century livery and a page boy at the reception.



João Mario Santo Domingo, Anne Bass, and Nan Kempner.



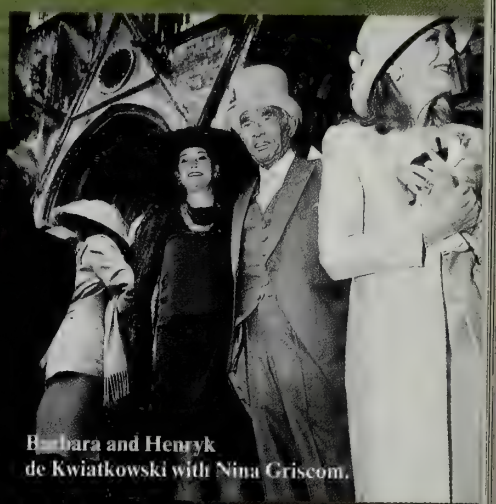
The Rajmata of Jaipur, Kenneth Jay Lane, and Georgette Mosbacher.



The château's façade.

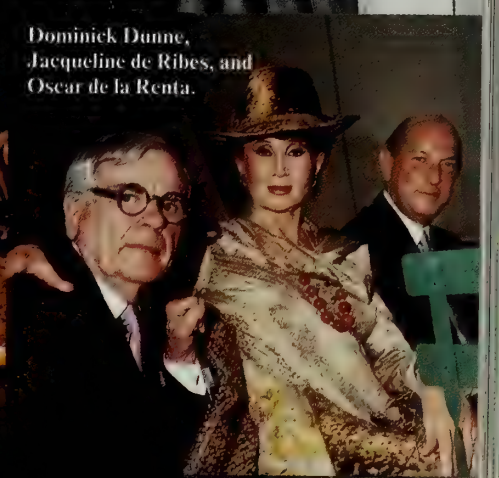
The bride and groom in the cathedral.





Barbara and Henryk de Kwiatkowski with Nina Griscom.

Dominick Dunne, Jacqueline de Ribes, and Oscar de la Renta.



gather outside the for the reception.





Prince Ernst of Hanover, Princess Caroline of Monaco, Ambassador Archibaldo Lanus of Argentina, Princess Maria Pia of Savoy, and Prince Michael of Bourbon-Parma at the concert at Versailles.

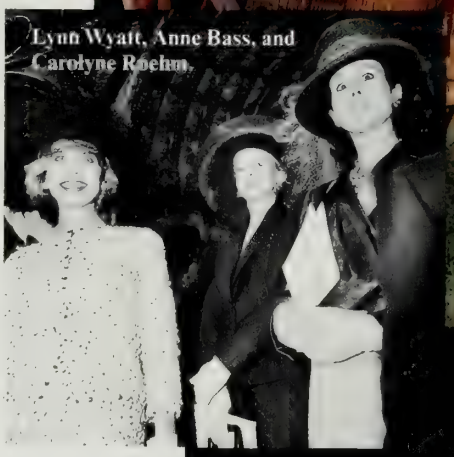
and the d'Arenberg Choir of Belgium—a wedding gift from Mstislav Rostropovich, the cellist and conductor, and his daughter Olga's in-laws, the Guerrand-Hermès family. Then came an elaborate display of gold and silver fireworks over the illuminated gardens and gushing fountains of Versailles, watched from, and reflected in, the Hall of Mirrors.

The *pièce de résistance* was supper in the Hall of the Battles, where the entire party was seated at a 300-foot-long table covered with one seamless gold brocade cloth, which party planner Pierre Celeyron had had woven in Lyons especially for the occasion. Each guest was served a whole black truffle en croûte, followed by lobster with a purée of potatoes and white truffles, and profiteroles for dessert. When an Argentinean debutante said two courses of truffles were too much, costume jeweler Kenneth Jay Lane snapped, "That's like complaining about having two orgasms in a row."

On Friday there was a Mass in memory of the groom's mother at the American Cathedral in Paris, followed by lunch at the Hôtel Ritz. At 9:30 the next morning, armed and uniformed guards stood watch at the Gare d'Austerlitz as several hundred guests, including Bryan and Lucy Ferry, David and Julia Koch, Cornelia Guest, Gilles Dufour of Chanel, Florence Grinda of Ungaro, and an assortment of Hapsburgs, Hohenlohes, Furstenbergs, and Bismarcks, boarded a special train for Bourges. As requested on the heavily embossed invitations, the women all wore hats and the men were in gray swallow-tailed morning dress. Several hundred more titles and tycoons made the two-hour trip in their own chauffeured Bentleys, Mercedeses, and Jaguars. The bride and groom helicoptered from Paris,


of Kuwait, Lady Rothermere, André Dunstetter, and São Schlumberger.


Falconer with falcons in the château gardens.


Lynn Wyatt, Anne Bass, and Carolyne Roehm.


Countess Bernard de Hemricourt de Grunne

Silvia de Castellane, dressed by Alexandre Vauthier, with her guard, Fiona Jean, at the dinner at Versailles.

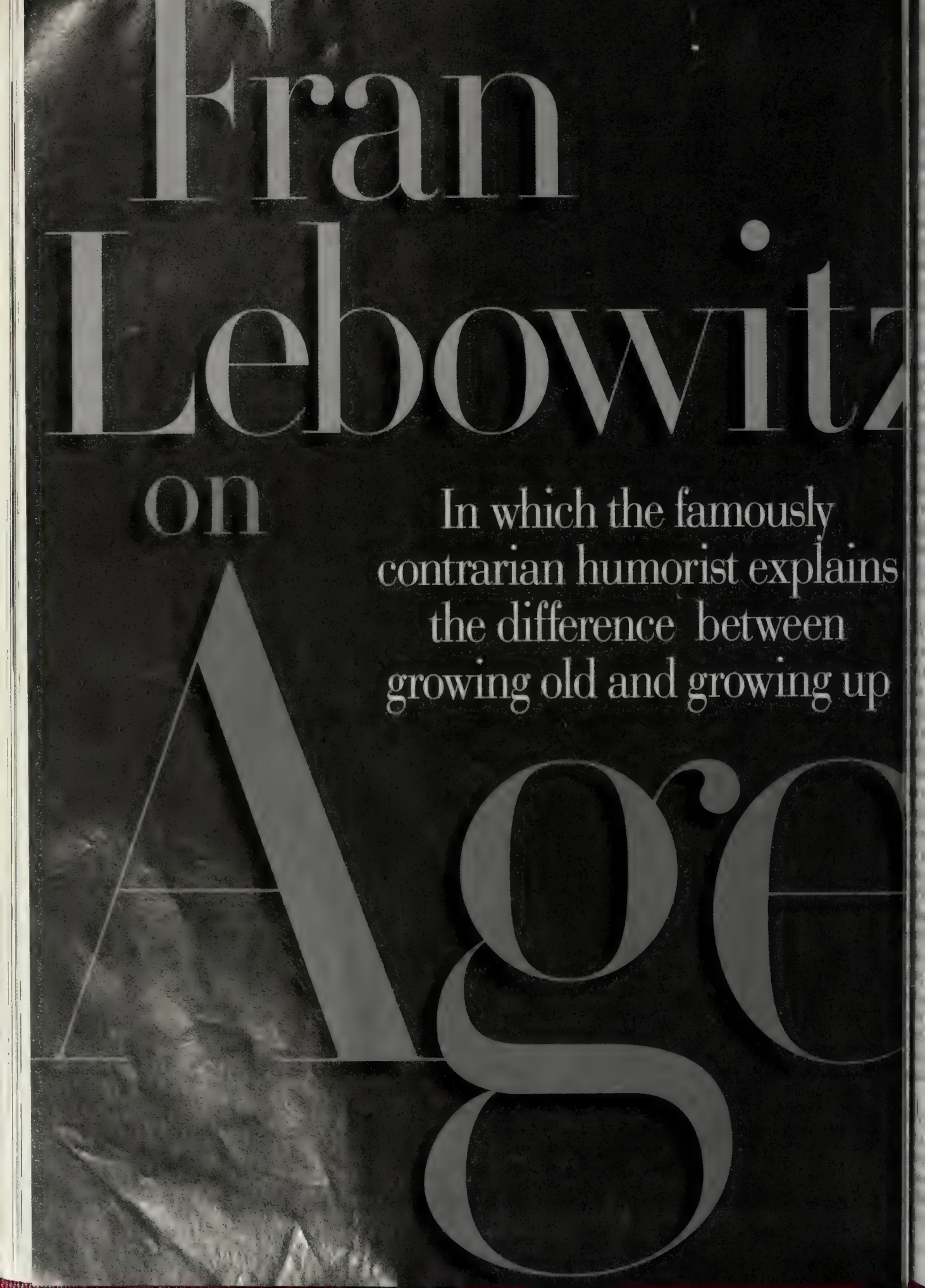


The entire supper party of 400 at Versailles was seated at a 300-foot-long table, covered with one seamless gold brocade cloth.

Filou, who travels everywhere with his mistress, awaits her impatiently in the d'Arenberg Rolls-Royce. Filou means "naughty boy" in French.

Fran Lebowitz on Age

In which the famously contrarian humorist explains the difference between growing old and growing up



Most children think being an adult means freedom. you think this is true?

perfect example of a childish thought. There are certain sons in life that tend to dispel such notions—that are lit- stepping-stones to adulthood. For me, the first one that an recall was being about four years old and having my nsils out. When I was a child, everyone had their ton- out. The second you coughed, they ripped them right t of your throat. One little rasp, boom, you're in the spital, your tonsils are gone. It was a common occur- nce; it was something that you wanted to do because eryone else did it. It was exciting. I led a fairly dull life a child, so just the break in routine was something that idn't really mind. And here's how my parents described "You're going to have your tonsils out. You're going to ve to go to the hospital, and have an operation, and ep there overnight by yourself. But it's going to be K., because after the operation you can have all the ice eam you want." This was, of course, a stupendous eam. And also my first lesson in adulthood: Yes, you have all the ice cream you want, but first we're going slit your throat. If you take that lesson, which I cer- nly did, you become an unusually bitter four-year-old, an unusually wise one—how often those two things go nd in hand. And so, my first exposure to adulthood was owing that at every moment in your life when they're ng to let you have all the ice cream you want, you will be able to swallow it.

id you ever want to be older so you could stay out late, you could do whatever you wanted, so you could have sex?

, not to have sex. I didn't want to have sex at four. I m to be one of the only writers in the country who sn't having sex at four. But, certainly as a child, I want- to do the things adults did. The distinction between ılts and children was far greater then than it is now. odern children have hard lives. We were really kept in dark—away from the world. We didn't have the re- nsibility of knowing things. Children were expected to innocent, and it was considered the responsibility of adults to maintain the innocence of children. For a ld to walk into a room where adults were talking in 1950s was almost invariably to have the adults stop ing. Not only did this spare you the burden of adult owledge, but it also enticed you by engendering the a of adult knowingness. In other words, it seemed ex- ng. It made you want to be an adult. It was forbid- , and so it took on a little of the quality of sex. Therefore, ad quite an innocent childhood, except for what I ld manage to overhear, and as I wasn't exactly living h Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas, I remained tively unscathed.

id you find childhood confining?

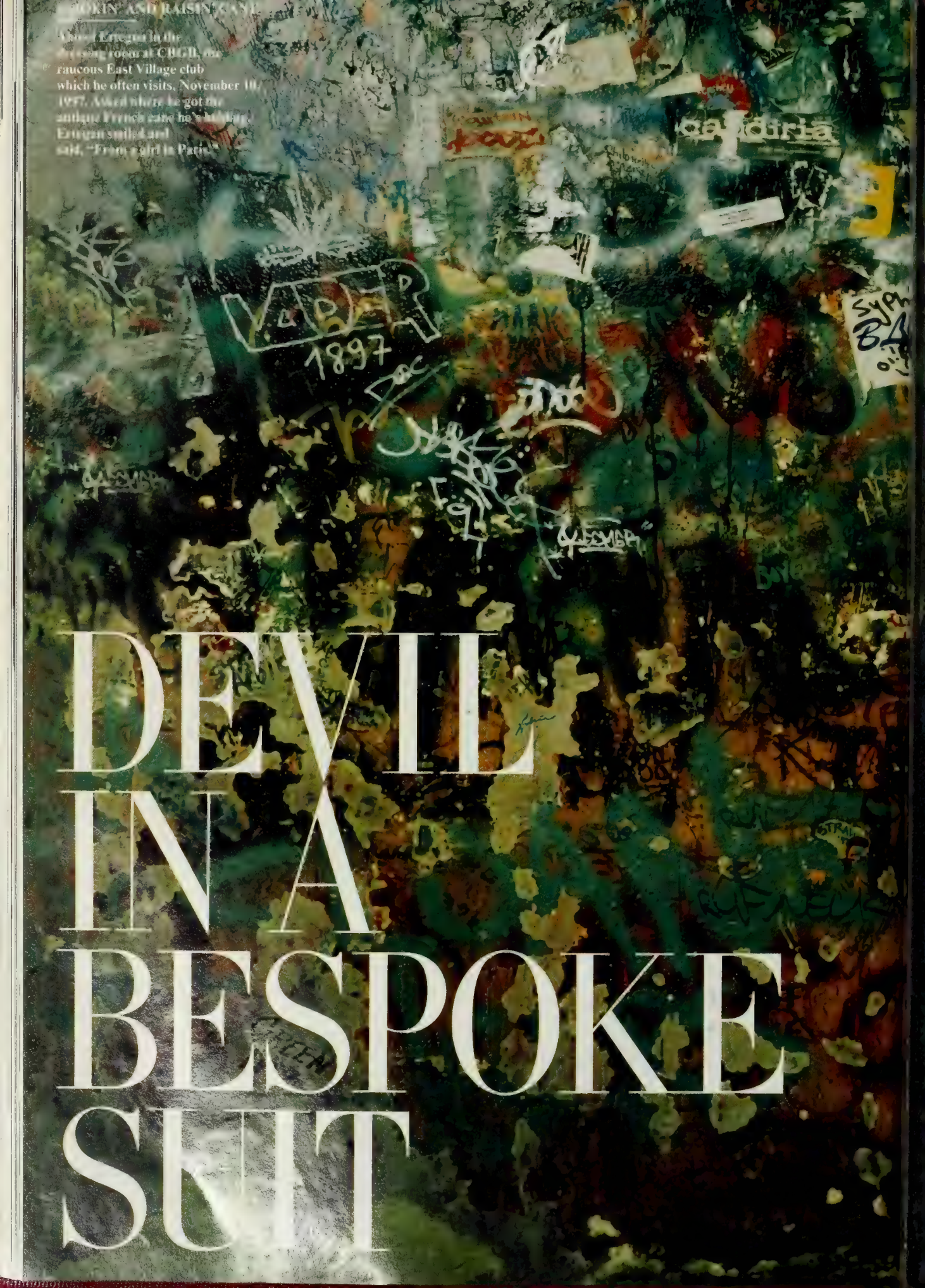
, in a certain way. Because we had a lot of rules that chil- n do not have now. We were very strictly brought up. re was no aspect of life for which we did not have a rule. Parents now burden their children with what is right- y their own responsibility—that of making decisions. You hear parents ask their children what school they want to go to. What school do they want to go to? Why would a child be capable of making this decision? If you're still of an age when you have to go to school, that would be the hint that you can't choose it.

I do not remember my childhood as being one of questions directed at me. The only thing I can ever remember being asked—and even this only occasionally—was "Which would you rather have, string beans or spinach?" Clearly a seven-year-old wants neither. So I began to have a view of the world where these were your choices. Here are your choices in life: string beans or spinach. Here are not your choices in life: string beans or candy. I think that's a good way to grow up, because the truth is: Here are your choices in life, string beans or spinach.

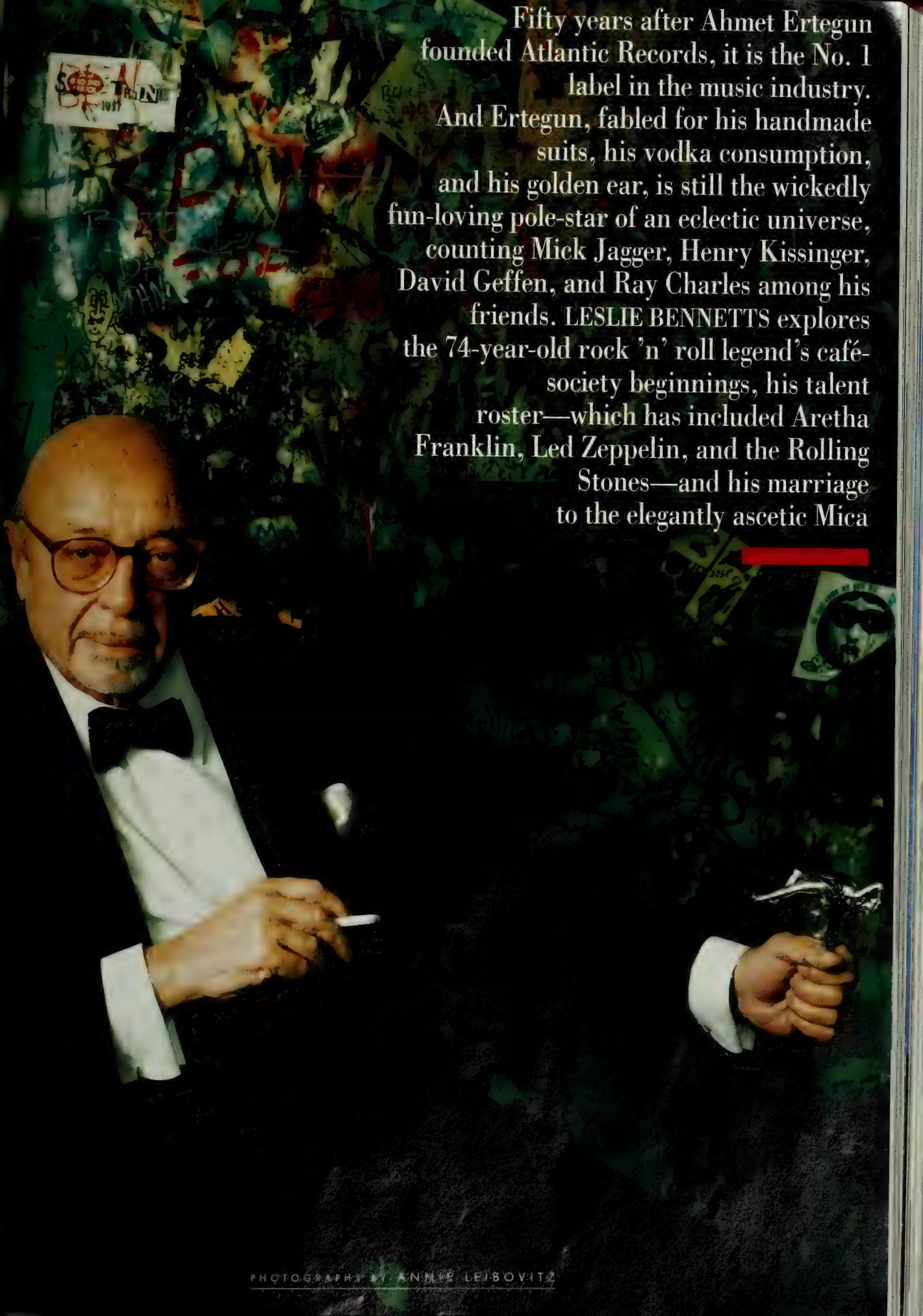
I hear mothers say, "She has one dress that she wears all the time—I can't get her to wear anything else." Did you do that when you were a kid?

I didn't. I'm not saying I was a child without desires of my own, but simply that my desires were routinely thwarted. "I can't get my child to do something" is not a phrase I ever heard. What does that mean? They're two feet tall—you're at least three feet taller. You're in charge of them. Our parents knew that. We were scared of them. I don't mean physically—my parents didn't hit us. But they were the boss. We responded to that. We believed in it, and so did they. They spoke with authority. When they said no, it wasn't negotiable. It wasn't a conversation. We didn't have conversations with our parents. I don't mean I didn't talk to my parents; I did. But we didn't discuss what I might do. Even my parents didn't have that many decisions to make, because they had the rules in their heads: This is what you do, this is what you don't do. The whole society had these rules. There wasn't much difference in child rearing from house to house. Some parents were more permissive than others; some were stricter. Some people's parents hit them. Some parents were richer and bought more things for their children, and some parents were poorer and bought fewer things for their children.

But basically a mother was a mother, and all the parents watched you. There were approximately one million mothers. You couldn't do anything. I grew up in a small town. You did something in the street 10 blocks away, the mother standing in that street called your mother. It was like living in East Berlin. If there was one thing I knew, it was that the phones were tapped. I knew that no matter where I was, I was being spied on. Someone was going to tell on me. From a contemporary standpoint I suppose that's considered bad, because children don't develop autonomy, or whatever. And it certainly made me angry as a child, and I certainly found it limiting. On the other hand, it did provide a kind of serenity, as fascism always does. It's like going to Japan: the place is like a giant military camp and it's relaxing to be there. So, probably, if you have to weigh these two things—which you do if you're a parent—I think it's better to go in the direction of fascism. You have a lifetime to make the wrong choices. Don't make them CONTINUED ON PAGE 134



DEVIL IN A BESPOKE SUIT



Fifty years after Ahmet Ertegun founded Atlantic Records, it is the No. 1 label in the music industry. And Ertegun, fabled for his handmade suits, his vodka consumption, and his golden ear, is still the wickedly fun-loving pole-star of an eclectic universe, counting Mick Jagger, Henry Kissinger, David Geffen, and Ray Charles among his friends. LESLIE BENNETTS explores the 74-year-old rock 'n' roll legend's café-society beginnings, his talent roster—which has included Aretha Franklin, Led Zeppelin, and the Rolling Stones—and his marriage to the elegantly ascetic Mica

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

Chris Blackwell, the founder of Island Records, was trying to sign a new artist named Kacy Crowley, and he thought he had a done deal. "And then she had a meeting with Ahmet Ertegun," Blackwell says glumly. "When I heard that, my heart sank. They're meeting with Ahmet—that's that. And that's exactly what happened. She signed with Atlantic."

For 50 years, rival record companies have been contending with The Ahmet Factor. The legendary Turk who founded Atlantic Records with a $10,000 loan from his dentist remains its co-chairman and co-C.E.O. today; as the company heads into a star-studded 50th-anniversary celebration this year, his fabled charm is as potent as ever. Although Ertegun is 74, anyone who underestimates his influence is making a grievous tactical error. "He is an enormous factor," says Clive Davis, the founder and president of Arista Records, Atlantic's leading competitor. "This is not a figurehead; this is someone who is still present to close deals and guide Atlantic into the future. He's a tremendous asset."

And after some stormy weather, Ertegun's company seems to be enjoying clear sailing these days. The Atlantic Group, which includes Atlantic, Rhino, and Curb Records, finished last year as the No. 1 label in the country, astonishing music-industry observers who had watched the company struggle and its sales plummet after a management shake-up two years ago. But by last fall the newspapers were full of headlines heralding Atlantic's comeback; global sales rose to $750 million for the year, with profits expected to triple. Through it all, Ertegun has remained the ultimate industry icon. "He's the greatest record executive alive today—the template by which everything else is measured," says David Geffen, a longtime friend

"We signed with Atlantic becau of the tradition," says Darius Ruc er, the lead singer of Hootie & t Blowfish, whose *Cracked Rear Vi* was the biggest-selling debut albu in the company's history. "They've h so many great bands over the yea Ahmet built an empire, and he did with amazing artists."

That tradition has seduced new t ent for decades. "When I was growi up, I used to buy a record just l cause it was on Atlantic, even if I did know the artist," says Phil Colli who signed with the company a qu ter of a century ago. "Atlantic alwa seemed to be on the cutting edge the R&B market, and I loved all t records that were on the label. Ahn is partly responsible for why I'm pl ing music today. If he and his partn hadn't formed that label, who kno what I'd be doing?"

Indeed, Ertegun has worked with virtual Who's Who of the music dustry. In its early years, Atlantic cused on what was then called "rac music, introducing rhythm-and-blu acts such as Big Joe Turner, Ru Brown, and the Coasters to white









ATLANTIC'S WAVES

Clockwise from top left: classic 45-r.p.m. recordings of Big Joe Turner's "Morning, Noon, and Night" (and Aretha Franklin's "A Natural Woman" (1967), two of Atlantic's earliest hits, made possible by Ert willingness to promote black artists and by partner Jerry Wexler's studio genius; Mick Jagger, Ertegun Bianca Jagger in Los Angeles, January 28, 1973; Ertegun, Duke Ellington, music critic Bill Gottlieb and Ahmet's brother, Nesuhi Ertegun, in 1941.

ences. But Ahmet realized early on
at the company's strength lay in di-
rsity, and while his brother, Ne-
hi, focused on jazz—the Erteguns
ned the Modern Jazz Quartet, Or-
tte Coleman, John Coltrane, Charles
ingus, and Rahsaan Roland Kirk
Atlantic—and their other partner,
rry Wexler, remained firmly com-
tted to R&B, Ahmet guided the com-
ny to enormous success with a
de range of music.

"Here's a guy who signed Aretha
anklin, Ray Charles, Bobby Darin,
ilson Pickett, Genesis, AC/DC, Son-
& Cher, Crosby, Stills & Nash,
ffalo Springfield, Iron Butterfly, Led
ppelin, and the Rolling Stones,"
s Val Azzoli, Atlantic's co-chairman.
hmet brought the Bee Gees and
ic Clapton to Atlantic; he brought
e Allman Brothers and Marshall
cker. We wouldn't have had the
ree Tenors if it weren't for Ahmet
tegun. He's reinvented himself,
d reinvented the company, to stay
rrent with ever changing times."

His company stands out among to-
y's record labels for its diversity; in
age of specialization, Atlantic re-
rds classical, country, jazz, rap, pop,
rock, R&B, and world music. Its artists include Jewel—whose debut album has been on the charts for nearly two years—Tori Amos, Sugar Ray, Brandy, and Matchbox 20, along with rap acts Lil' Kim and Timbaland and Magoo. It's only fitting that the main exhibition space at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland was named the Ahmet M. Ertegun Exhibition Hall; he was a prime mover behind the entire project. "It was his vision," says Jann Wenner, the editor and publisher of *Rolling Stone* and the Hall of Fame's executive vice president.

Not that Ahmet's artists regard him as some kind of venerable elder. Perennially hipper than the rock stars he cultivated, Ahmet has always stood out among the suits and bean counters who typically run record companies. "Labels and artists are never going to get along, because they think we're brats and we think they just haven't smoked enough," says Tori Amos. "But with Ahmet you know he's smoked more than you ever did. I don't know what he's got in his tea, but he can dance your butt off the floor. I can't keep up with him. He just puts me under the table."

Last summer Led Zeppelin received an award in London; Ahmet, who'd just gotten over a case of pneumonia—and who still limps from a shattered pelvis and three separate hip operations—flew over to present it to them. "Everyone was wondering if he had special dietary requirements," says Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page. "Did he want a particular kind of spring water? 'No, no,' he says. 'Absolut vodka, please.' He's a great role model for all of us musicians who hit 50 and slowed up."

The street outside Mortimer's is tented and ablaze with lights for the annual Fête de Famille AIDS benefit. Impeccably attired in a bespoke navy suit and handmade leather shoes, Ahmet strolls into the throng, his hooded eyes watchful and a faint smile of amusement tugging at the



HIGH TIDES

ght, Island Records founder
is Blackwell and Ertegun, in
e 1970s. Blackwell concedes
hat Atlantic has beaten him
battles to sign new talent; he
attributes the victories to
Ertegun's charisma. *Below,*
egun listening to records by
ames and Livingston Taylor
in London, 1971.

AT THE CREST

Above, Ertegun and David Geffen in Beverly Hills, 1971. Ertegun was Geffen's role model in the 1970s, when Geffen was managing Crosby, Stills & Nash; the band turned down Columbia Records to sign with Atlantic because of Ertegun's roguish charm. *Left,* Diana de Cordova, Ahmet, Mica, Julio Mario Santo Domingo, and Robin Butler at New York's Plaza hotel, 1960.

TABLE FOR TWO

Ahmet and Mica Ertegun flank David Hockney's *Still Life on a Glass Table,* the centerpiece of their 12-room Manhattan town house, November 6, 1997. The Erteguns also own a house in Southampton, a retreat in Turkey, and an apartment in Paris—"across from Dior," Mica points out.




"We have no
secrets from one another,"
Mica says. "Even if
it's something he knows
annoys me."

corners of his mouth as society ladies surge around him, scattering air kisses. He is unfailingly gracious, but every once in a while he whispers a wickedly funny observation in my ear—and then, earnestly, asks me not to use it in print. Although he is famous for his wit, he doesn't like to be cruel. "Ahmet is infinitely thoughtful and kind," says Henry Kissinger.

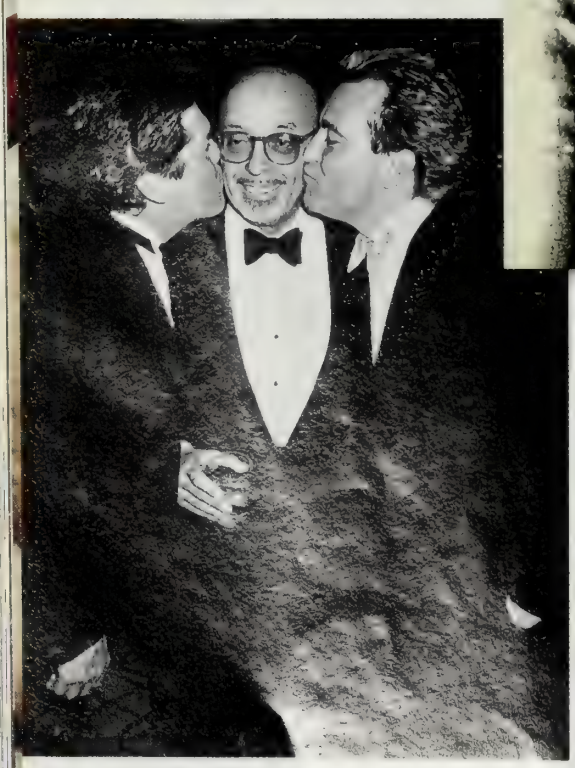
Ahmet wends his way through the crowd, saying hello to Pat Buckley, Bobby Short, Happy Rockefeller, Liza Minnelli, Arnold Scaasi, Suzy, Bill Blass. Ahmet has been a member of café society since he was a young man, when his well-trained driver would respond to the directive "Let's go home" by driving the Rolls straight to El Morocco. But Ahmet lives in many other worlds as well, and right now he's trying to see the band he contributed to this evening. In one corner we see a Peter Duchin ensemble playing bland, generic music, but Ahmet shakes his head. "That's not my band," he says gruffly, too civilized to express his disdain. His group turns out to be an R&B jazz band with an unshaven Turkish saxophone player, a slinky black singer with a tattoo on her shoulder—and a whole lot more soul. Ahmet nods approvingly, pays the band, hugs the Turk, and heads off to dinner with the Kissingers.

Ahmet's life has always encompassed such contrasts. The son of a Turkish ambassador to the United States, Mehmet Münir Ertegun, he arrived in Washington at the age of 12, having grown up at embassies in London and Paris. French (the language of the court in Turkey) was his first tongue, and he learned English—"with a rather stilted accent," he says—from an English governess who had worked at Buckingham Palace.

Distinctly Old World in manner and sensibility, Ahmet immersed himself in the most low-down aspects of American life. His older brother, Nesuhi, had taught him about jazz and taken him to see Duke Ellington at the London Palladium when Ahmet was 10 years old. "It changed my life," he said. In America, he and Nesuhi started collecting jazz and blues records. "We would go house-to-house in black sections of town, saying, 'Have you got any old records you want to sell?,'" Ahmet recalls. Before long he and his brother had amassed a collection of 20,000 78-r.p.m. records. He also spent innumerable hours hanging out in b record stores, soaking up the lor "race" music. "We were fans," Ah explains. "We idolized these musici and we got to know them."

When Ahmet 21 his father and his mo and sister turned to Tur leaving Ah and Nesuhi America. "We had to make our way," says Ahmet. Even as a col student on a modest allowance, he already begun his career as a " *viveur,*" as his wife, Mica Erte puts it. He quickly earned a reputa as a playboy, squiring famous mo frequenting nightclubs, driving fl sports cars—his first was a Jagu and always wearing beautiful clot He made the best-dressed lists l before he actually became rich.

"I used to go to the boys' dep ment at Brooks Brothers because largest size would fit me, but the s







LIPS, ZIPS, AND STAR TRIPS

From far left, Rolling Stone publisher Jann Wenner and Foreigner's Mick Jone pucker up for Ahmet at the 1987 National Conference of Christians and J (where Ertegun received the Irvin Feld Humanitarian Award); *Sticky Fingers,* 19 the first Atlantic album recorded by the Rolling Stones after Ertegun lured them away from Decca by playing hard-to-get then passing out drunk moments before M Jagger suggested the move to Atlantic; Bette Midler, Ertegun, Cher, and David Geffen at the '21' Club, 1974.

uld cost less than half what the n's suits cost," Ahmet says, eyes nkling behind his horn-rimmed sses. "Then I would take them to wonderful Armenian tailor at the onquin, who would redo the stitch- and alter the suit so it looked or-made."

His image was further defined when began to go bald at 17, which made look a great deal older than he . So did his trademark goatee. e looked exactly the same as now, his beard was not speckled with ," says his oldest friend, Julio Mario to Domingo, a billionaire indus- list who owns Avianca Airlines. From his lustrous monogrammed ts to his $3,000 Lobb shoes (he ns hundreds of pairs) to the per- ly cut suits and jackets he gets n a Spanish tailor who flies to New k to fit him, Ahmet is the epitome legance. While other music-industry cutives wore Nehru jackets and beads in a desperate attempt to main- their hipster credentials, Ahmet ered to his usual high style, earn- the admiration the scruffiest sts as well as social arbiters. he classic scene hmet backstage some drugged- , grunged-out he, in his knit tie checkered jack-

et and perfectly pressed trousers, looking like some prince who just arrived, and he strokes his beard and starts talking and he's as low-down and funky as anyone there," says Jann Wenner, a friend for 30 years.

"He was Mr. Stork Club, but at the same time he was also Mr. Cotton Club," says Bette Midler, a close friend. "He went back and forth between those two worlds, and all the worlds in between."

Ahmet's familiarity with the music world emboldened him enough to found Atlantic Records in 1948. "When I was hanging around in record shops, I met several people who had record labels, and they didn't know anything about the music," he says, still amazed. "I thought I could make it in the record business because I knew more. I also knew that the major companies were not making enough of the kind of records the black market demanded."

At first the venture seemed like a lark—a way to record the music he loved, earn some extra money, and have a good time. For a while Ahmet thought he would eventually go on to something more serious, like a career as a Turkish diplomat, but Atlantic proved too successful to abandon.

"Atlantic was a seminal record company," says Wenner. "Ahmet founded one of the great record labels of our times, and is responsible for the finding, promotion, and production of one of the great bodies of recorded work, particularly black American work. At the time, there was no other home for a huge stream of rhythm-and-blues music. But at Atlantic, they understood R&B in a way the major labels didn't. Without what Ahmet did himself and what he made possible for others to do, I don't think American music would be as good today."

It certainly wouldn't have been as much fun. A hilarious and often bawdy raconteur, Ahmet has always been a master of the put-on and the diabolical practical joke; he delights in assuming various voices and disguises to torture his friends. And he is irrepressible. When he and Henry Kissinger traveled to China CONTINUED ON PAGE 130









TINA HUGS; KISSINGER TELLS

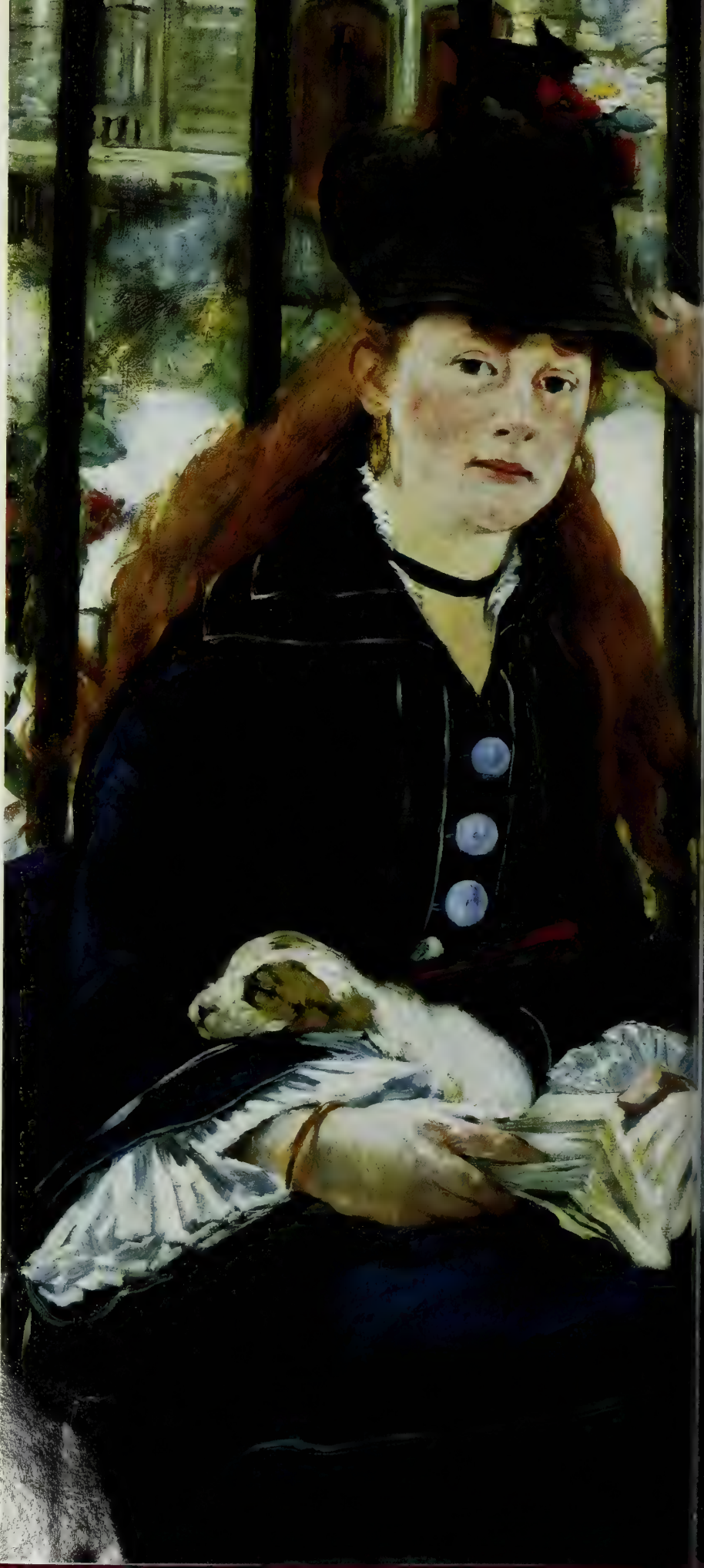
Clockwise from top left: Ertegun with Tina Turner, 1991; with designer Oscar de la Renta and his first wife, Françoise de la Renta, in the Dominican Republic, early 80s; with Henry Kissinger and Mica at the National Conference of Christians and Jews awards dinner at New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, April 27, 1987; the 68-year-old Ertegun leaves Hollywood's Bar One nightclub in the small hours with music producer Phil Spector, February 7, 1991.

MYSTERY TRAIN

It is hard to believe that Édouard Manet's *Gare Saint-Lazare* was ever controversial, that the Paris public was affronted by the little girl who turned her back on them, and that critics made fun, comparing the train station's iron railing to the bars of a madhouse. Then again, the more you look at *Gare Saint-Lazare*, the stranger it seems. This work is a puzzle of perception.

Dated 1873, *Gare Saint-Lazare* is the first great painting of Paris's first railway station, and as such will be part of an exhibition called "Manet, Monet, and the Gare Saint-Lazare," which opens February 2 at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris and arrives at Washington, D.C.'s National Gallery on June 14. Still, Manet's *Gare Saint-Lazare* is hardly a painting of the Gare Saint-Lazare: Where's the station? Where's the train? Collector Louisine W. Havemeyer, whose husband bought the painting in 1898, believed "it tells of all childhood." Yet right beside bare-armed Innocence sits Experience. These two females are arranged in compact opposition, like the negative-positive of a photograph. The younger is light, as if made of the mist; the elder is encumbered, entombed in dark blue. Are they simply mother and daughter? Or past and future, memory and desire? Or are we seeing things?

—LAURA





THE RAILWAY

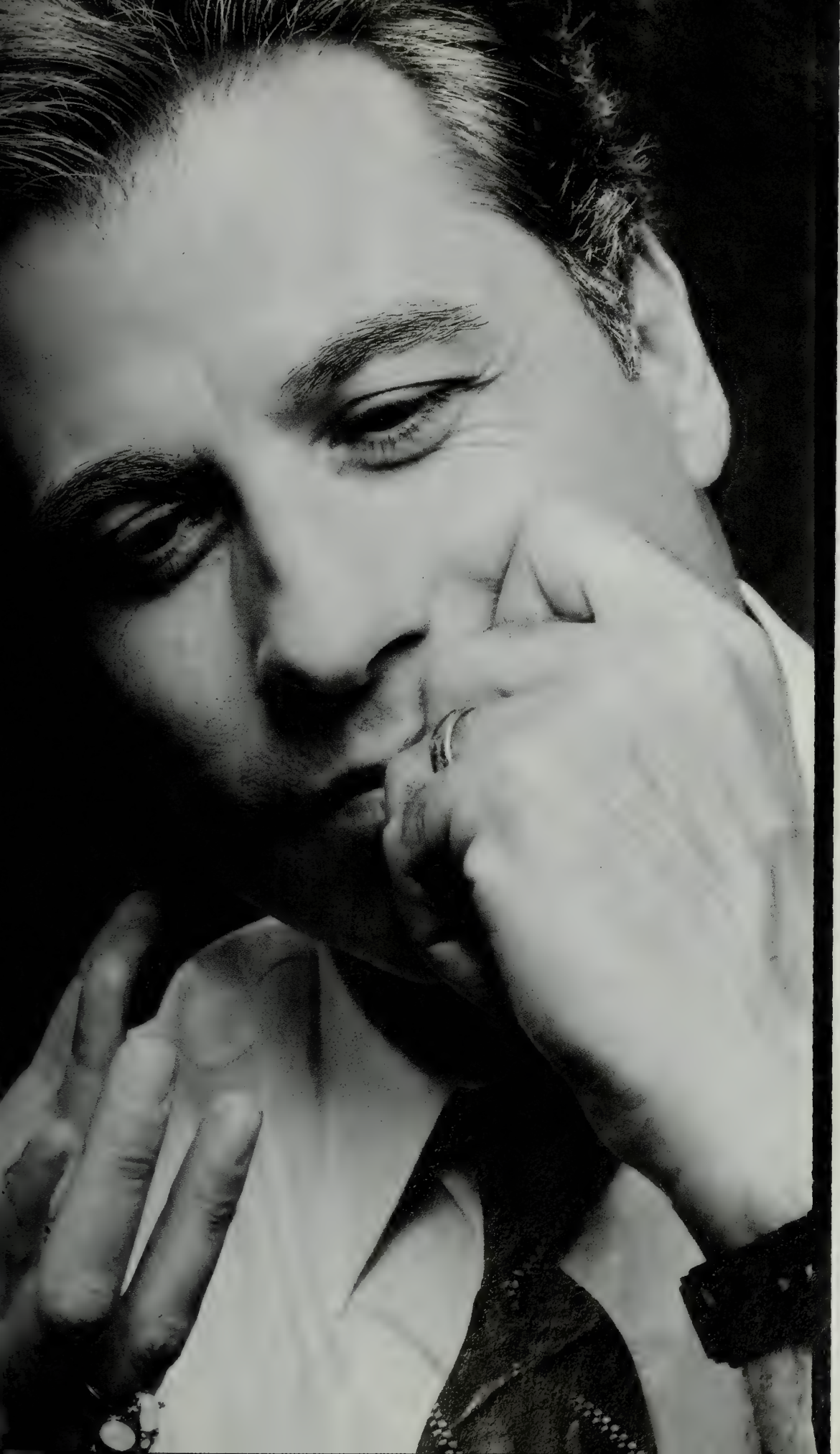
Gare Saint-Lazare, by Edouard Manet, 1873 (oil on canvas, 36¼ in. by 45⅞ in.), from the collection of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Everyone involved in the filming of *Primary Colors*, including director Mike Nichols, denies that John Travolta and Emma Thompson are playing characters based on Bill and Hillary Clinton. From her days in the White House, DEE DEE MYERS spots just a few similarities

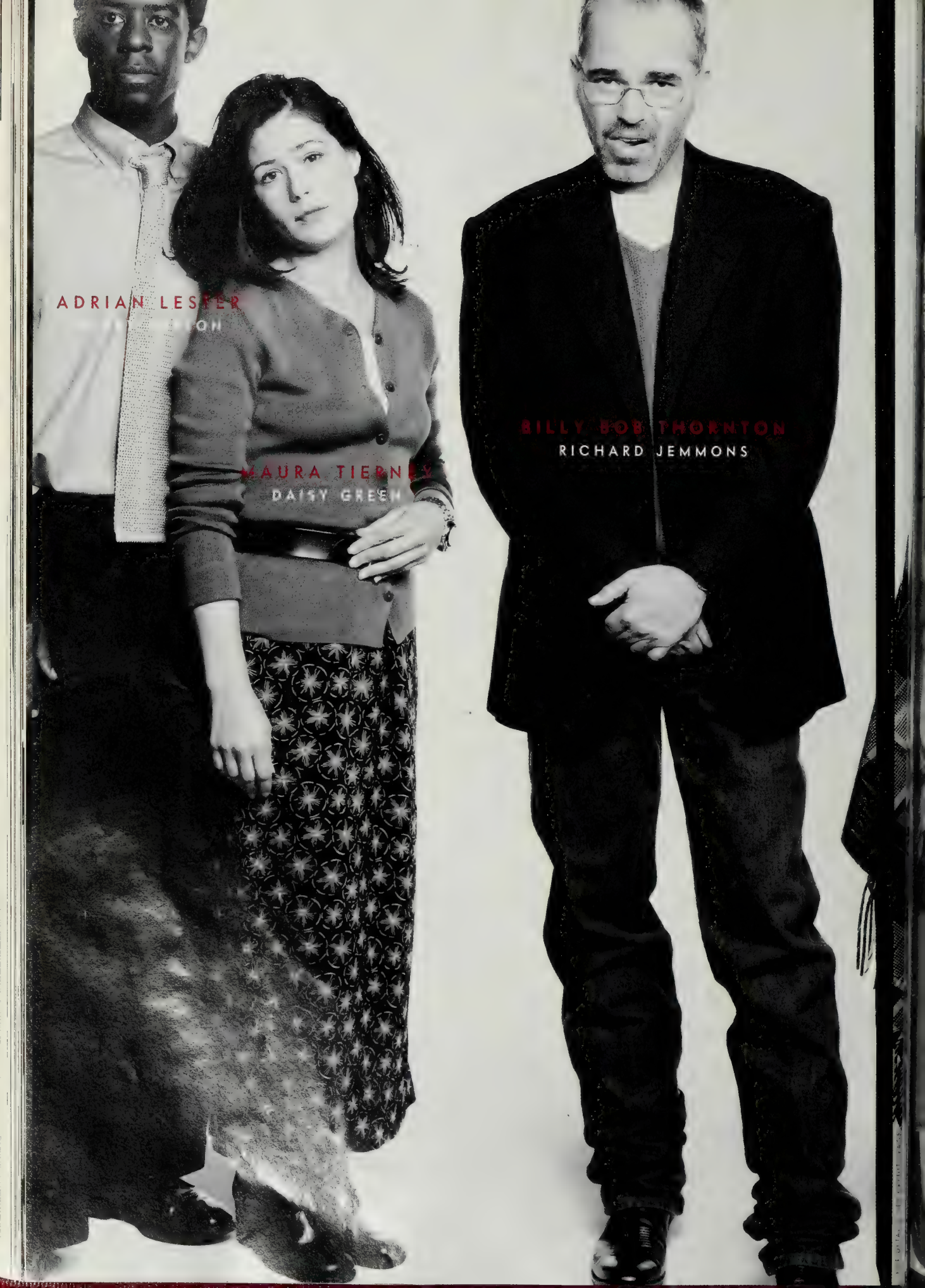
True Colors

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ



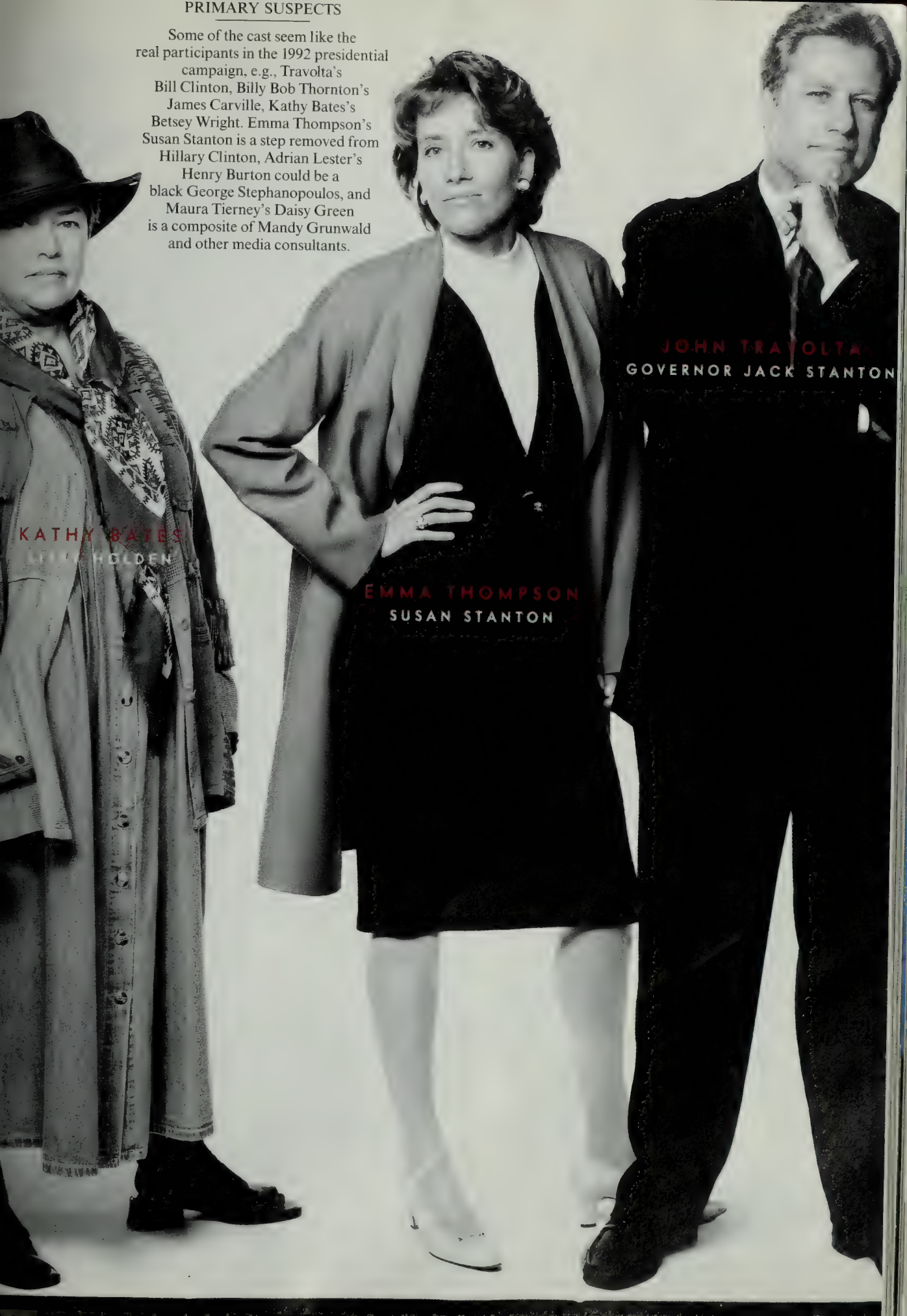
POWER SHARING

As potential First Couple Jack and Susan Stanton, John Travolta emulates Bill Clinton to a surprising degree, while Emma Thompson portrays a hard-hitting and aggressive lawyer similar to Hillary Clinton.


ADRIAN LESTER
MAURA TIERNEY
DAISY GREEN
BILLY BOB THORNTON
RICHARD JEMMONS

PRIMARY SUSPECTS

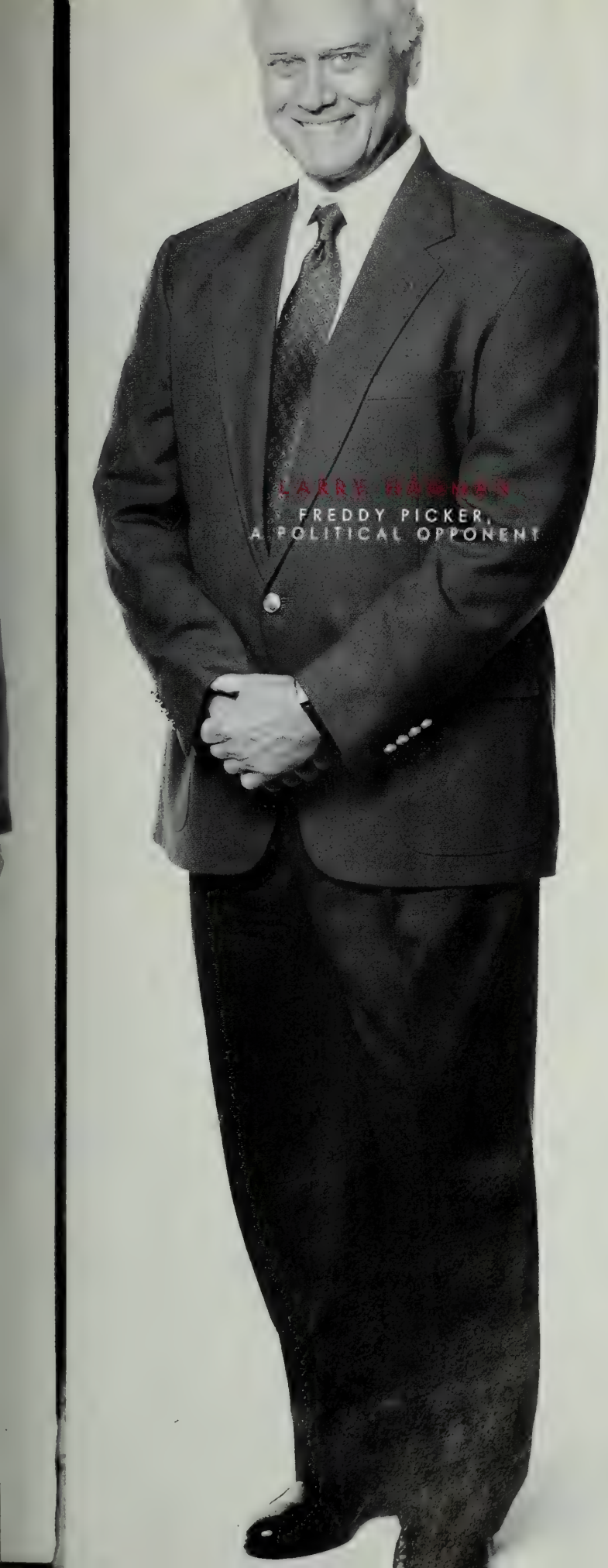
Some of the cast seem like the real participants in the 1992 presidential campaign, e.g., Travolta's Bill Clinton, Billy Bob Thornton's James Carville, Kathy Bates's Betsey Wright. Emma Thompson's Susan Stanton is a step removed from Hillary Clinton, Adrian Lester's Henry Burton could be a black George Stephanopoulos, and Maura Tierney's Daisy Green is a composite of Mandy Grunwald and other media consultants.





COMPLEMENTARY COLORS

Figures influencing Travolta/Stanton's campaign in the film are Gia Carides as a sort of Gennifer Flowers, who is also Susan Stanton's hairdresser; Diane Ladd as the governor's forceful mother; and Larry Hagman as the governor's major political opponent.



Ten years ago, you could have made a fortune from people willing to bet they'd never pay five dollars to watch John Travolta dance again, let alone play a credible candidate for the world's most important job. But the resilience and earthy charm that have given the erstwhile disco king an unlikely second act as a star make him the perfect choice to play Bill Clinton. These are two guys who just won't quit. Dyed gray, Travolta has even adopted Clinton's mannerisms, from the hands draped limply over the lectern in mid-speech to the chin resting on a fist in a moment of "aerobic listening," to the laser gaze that locks on its target.

Everyone from the author to the director to the executives at Universal denies that *Primary Colors* is about the Clintons. But anyone with more than a passing interest in politics will recognize most of the characters. A brilliant but eccentric southern political strategist (Billy Bob Thornton as James Carville). A young, idealistic, trusted aide (Adrian Lester as a black George Stephanopoulos). An unhinged but unfailingly loyal protector of the governor's problematic past (Kathy Bates as Betsey Wright). Some of the characters are composites. Others, like the governor's wife, miss their real-life mark; the hard-charging lawyer wife, played by Emma Thompson, is written as more pointed and more profane than Hillary Clinton. Even so, the similarities are unmistakable.

Joe Klein, who covered the 1992 presidential campaign for *New York* magazine and *Newsweek*, claims he didn't write the book from his notes. Maybe not. But those of us who were there recognize the snowy New Hampshire landscape, the late-night strategy sessions, and the cycle of despair and elation as more fact than fiction. Klein wrote the book under the pseudonym "Anonymous" in order to fuel speculation about what was real and what wasn't. And to keep the debate—and the sales—going, he vehemently and repeatedly denied that he was the author. Harmless "white lies," he later said.

How appropriate. After all, one of the most compelling themes in the book (and in the leaner, much funnier Elaine May screenplay) is that the characters are continually forced to face the consequences of their compromises. In other words, was it worth it? Did the ends really justify the means? □

A Perfect Star



With her impeccable makeup, trademark bangs, and stunning legs, Claudette Colbert became America's highest-paid movie star in 1938 by sheer force of will. At Bellerive, the 18th-century plantation house on Barbados where Colbert entertained Sinatra, the Harrimans, the Paleys, and the Reagans, AMY FINE COLLINS recalls a woman who played by her own perfectionist rules, from the timing with which she left the screen to the secret liaison with Clark Gable, her co-star in *It Happened One Night*

The athletic actress hits the Sun Valley slopes with Gary Cooper, early 1940s. *Opposite,* the infamous photograph of Marlene Dietrich and Colbert at Carole Lombard's Venice beach party, June 20, 1935. *Inset,* on the cover of the October 13, 1934, *Universal Weekly.*





COLBERT NECESSITIES

Twenty-eight-year-old Claudette Colbert shows off her famous legs in her first bathing-beauty shot, Hollywood, August 1932. *Opposite*, on the set of *It Happened One Night* with director Frank Capra and Clark Gable, 1934.

Gregory Peck described Colbert as "the best thing we've gotten from France since the Statue of Liberty."

uring the Acad- Awards broadcast last spring, television in the Barbados living n of the late Claudette Colbert not tuned to the show—not even n, in the course of the ceremo- obituary montage, her beguiling flashed past, laughing, in a clip n Cecil B. DeMille's 1934 *Cleopa-* The Oscar that Colbert had won same year for *It Happened One t,* once a fixture on the bar down hall, was not visible, either—it already been shipped off for a stie's sale in Los Angeles. Yet ything else at Bellerive, the 18th- ury plantation house to which Col- withdrew after her Hollywood er ended in 1961, had stayed vir- y the same since her death on July 1996, at 92. Her lady's maid of ears, Marie Corbin, was still pad- quietly in white slippers through placid coral-stone house. Beulah fith, the cook, was still conjur- up Colbert's favorite dishes—cur- shrimp, lamb chops, apple brown y—in the careworn kitchen, and e homey meals were still being ed skillfully by crisply uniformed ls, in the open-air Chinese pavil- by day and by night in the for- turquoise-walled dining room.

or a year following Colbert's death, ever, the proprietress of Bellerive Helen O'Hagan, Colbert's closest panion and confidante of 20 years. former vice president of public ions for Saks Fifth Avenue, O'Ha- became with the actress's passing ole executor and major beneficiary ie Colbert estate. Heaped on the -and-white floral-print sofas and suave 30s Lucite tables were, on particular night, fan letters, movie , and scrapbooks documenting ife of the celluloid goddess Hed- da Hopper once called "the smartest, canniest, smoothest 18-karat lady I've ever seen cross the Hollywood pike." O'Hagan, her lap laden with dusty albums, sat reminiscing about the actress until nearly midnight, the reverential cadence of her words accompanied by the rhythmic lapping of the surf, visible from paneless windows that overlook the prettiest cove on the island.

"Claudette was really a Renaissance woman—a modern woman ahead of her times," O'Hagan recalled. Marie interjected in her tiny doll-voice, "I loved my dear little Madame more than the earth."

In the twilight of her movie career the actress cautioned an interviewer, "How could we talk about Claudette Colbert? There is an old French proverb: 'Happy countries and honest women have no stories to tell about themselves.'" Perhaps she might have had some tales to tell if she had spoken instead of Lily Emilie Chauchoin, the name given to her at birth. The second child of a pastry-shop owner, Georges Claude Chauchoin, and Jeanne Loew, Lily was born in the Paris suburb of St.-Mandé on September 13, 1903. After M. Chauchoin suffered business reverses, the family moved to New York when Lily was three and her brother, Charles, eight.

The Chauchoins settled into a fifth-floor walk-up at 226 East 53rd Street. "Claudette said that climbing those stairs every day until the age of 18 is what made her legs so beautiful," says a friend. M. Chauchoin found a job as a minor official at First National City Bank (Citibank's precursor), and the children attended grammar school at P.S. 59 on 57th Street. From the earliest age, Mme. Chauchoin told her daughter that *she* was the beauty in the family, and that little Lily was an ugly duckling. "She gave Claudette a terrific complex," says Leonora Hornblow, widow of the producer Arthur Hornblow Jr. and a friend of Colbert's since 1942. Coco Lewis, the daughter of Colbert's brother, says that Mme. Chauchoin "clearly favored my father. She thought he could do no wrong. Aunt Claudette spent her life searching for her approval."

Colbert, who had wanted to be a painter ever since she could hold a pencil, enrolled in Washington Irving High School because of its strong art program. But in December 1918, when she was 15, Colbert was unexpectedly thrust onto the stage by the school's elocution department. "A girl in the class play became ill," she told film critic Rex Reed in the course of an unpublished interview late in her life. "I was dragged into the production at the 11th hour because I was the only one in the school who really spoke fluent French." The play was called *Grammar,* and the part was that of "Blanche, Cabousset's daughter."

Colbert said that as a consequence "the acting bug took a slice out of me," and around 1919, when she learned that the Provincetown Playhouse in Greenwich Village was paying $75 a week to actresses, she went down with a friend and landed a role in a production called *The Widow's Veil.* In the meantime, she was also earning around $35 a week giving French lessons. Throughout her life, Colbert continued to think, dream, and pray in French, and spoke only in her native tongue with her mother.

One of Colbert's students seems to have arranged for her to meet the writer Anne Morrison in 1923, during casting calls for her



play *The Wild Westcotts*. Colbert won a tiny part, and her Broadway debut at the Frazee Theatre on 42nd Street consisted of exactly three lines: "The party was so lovely. The garden is beautiful. I am so hungry." From then on, Colbert stated, "I never wanted to do anything else."

Right from the start, the spirited young actress adopted a *nom de théâtre,* selected by her mother. "Claudette"—an appellation that the actress erroneously claimed had never existed until Mme. Chauchoin made it up—was a diminutive of her father's middle name, and "Colbert" was plucked from a remote branch of the family tree.

By the end of 1925, the year of her father's death, Colbert had appeared in about half a dozen plays, but with her performance as a kept woman in *A Kiss in a Taxi* she leapt into the limelight. The play's producer, "a shark named Al Woods," had signed her up for a five-year contract at $150 a week—enough money to move her family out of the East Side walk-up into grander accommodations at 55 Central Park West. "We had got into the luxury class," Colbert said.

During the same year, *Billboard* announced that Woods "has ambitious plans for her future," and critics salivated over her. "In Miss Colbert's beauty there is a certain strangeness," wrote one. "Her eyes are the only absolutely black eyes we ever saw. She laughs all the time and is filled with life and vivacity, and yet there is a certain mingling of virginity, an air of dignity." Likewise impressed with her physical assets, Walter Winchell dubbed her "Legs Colbert."

One reason Colbert began generating so much heat was her performance in 1927's *The Barker* at the Biltmore Theater. She and the novice actor Norman Foster (né Hoeffer), who played her love interest, were carrying on a real-life, torrid, and clandestine affair. "Norman was a charming man—a wholesome American boy," says photographer and Hollywood hostess Jean Howard. When the play traveled to London in 1928, the lovers were surreptitiously wed. "I was so terrified of my mother's disapproval, I kept the marriage a secret," Colbert told Reed. She feared Mme. Chauchoin to such an extent that for the couple's entire seven-year marriage Colbert continued to live with her mother, while Foster maintained a separate residence.

Like many successful stage actors of the period, Colbert in 1927 began a routine of working in the theater at night and filming during the day at the studios then flourishing around New York. Her debut movie—her only silent picture—was a slapdash undertaking called *For the Love of Mike,* directed by Frank Capra. Discouraged by the uninspired results, Colbert vowed never to do another film. "When I saw myself, I was appalled," she said. "I was sure nobody would pay to look at me. Apparently I was wrong."

Colbert, of course, changed her mind about the medium. Around the same time she was appearing on Broadway in Eugene O'Neill's *Dynamo* (which the March 1929 *Vanity Fair* promoted with a Steichen portrait of the starlet), she made her first talkie, Paramount's *The Hole in the Wall,* with Edward G. Robinson. *Time* prophesied that Colbert's "screen dom is assured," and Paramount' Coast office in the meantime h warded her with a contract. Nc Foster also signed with Paramoun in 1930 the couple co-starred in *Man of Manhattan,* Ginger Roger movie. (Ironically, one critic that Foster "did not seem to ge sincerity into his love scenes.")

George Abbott's *Manslaughter* (ended her stint with Paramount toria, Queens, studio, from whic company withdrew in 1932. "W was still the toast of Broadway,' bert said, "the stock market cra talking pictures were in, and the only 37 people showed up in th dience of the Elmer Ric



YES, YES, CLAUDETTE!

Opposite, the comically gifted Colbert settles into director Preston Sturges's lap while Joel McCrea looks on during the filming of *The Palm Beach Story,* 1942. *Insets, from top right:* Colbert with first husband Norman Foster and producer Carl Laemmle Jr., Los Angeles, 1930s; mugging for the camera with Carole Lombard at the Venice Pier fun house, 1935; featured at her Holmby Hills home on the cover of *Life,* November 13, 1939; and director Ernst Lubitsch visits the actress on the set of *The Sign of the Cross,* 1932.



"Everybody on the Paramount lot had a crush on Claudette."

See Naples and Die I knew it was time to see Hollywood or die." She and her mother boarded the Super Chief for California, and the West Coast Paramount office dispatched still photographer John Engstead, along with one producer and a limousine, to greet her at L.A.'s Santa Fe station. "It wasn't one of the big-time arrivals," Engstead noted.

Colbert languished at Paramount for a few years in "fluffy, light-headed roles which, I felt, did not give scope enough to her talent," Cecil B. DeMille wrote. The director, however, suddenly rejuvenated her career when he "stopped her one day on the Paramount lot, and without any warning or explanation asked her, 'How would you like to play the wickedest woman in the world?' Claudette's beautiful big eyes opened wider and she said: 'I'd love it.'" The part DeMille had in mind was Poppaea, Emperor Nero's lascivious wife, for his perverse historical spectacle *The Sign of the Cross.*

While Poppaea was tossing her chaste Christian rival to the lions, Colbert, in real life, was menaced by a wolf in the person of her co-star Fredric March. "Freddie March was the worst womanizer I ever knew," Colbert told Rex Reed. "His hands had 20 fingers, I swear, and they were always on my ass. I finally said, 'If you don't stop I'll walk right out of the scene and tell Mr. DeMille what you're doing.' . . . So the camera rolled again. I'm on top of the throne surrounded by four blacks—they called them Nubians then, honey—and all the eunuchs. The blacks and the eunuchs were always shooting craps. Anyway, Mr. DeMille yelled 'Action,' and all of a sudden I felt this hand right around my left cheek and I stopped and walked down to camera and demanded to see Mr. DeMille!" Even when John Engstead was taking publicity shots for the movie, March could not resist fondling her derrière. One photo, "with Freddie's hand wrapped around my rear end," Colbert said, found its way into the *Police Gazette.* "And the caption read, 'Even if the Marines haven't landed, Freddie March seems to have the situation well in hand.'" Affronted, she stormed into the studio boss's office, and as a result, Engstead said, "she was the first star at Paramount to get . . . approval of her photographs . . . and it was all my fault."

March was not alone in his lust for Colbert. "Everybody on the Paramount lot had a crush on her," says producer A. C. Lyles, then an office boy. And once the public was treated to the titillating sight of an unclothed Colbert frolicking in a bath of ass's milk, she attracted legions of new admirers. "Two men with cardboard stirred up the milk at the other end of the bathtub so it would make waves," she disclosed to Rex Reed, "and the milk went below my nipples. DeMille would yell 'Cut!' till they got more milk above the censorship level. I was sweating like hell in all that hot milk!" DeMille, however, was forced to use the footage already shot when, after a dinner break, everyone returned to the set to find that the milk had cooled down and curdled into cheese.

Colbert's career was given another needed boost with the help of Hollywood's first power agent, Charles Feldman, who set up the deal that would catapult Colbert to the loftiest heights of the Hollywood empyrean. For months a script by Robert Riskin called *Night Bus*—the madcap tale of a runaway heiress who falls in love with the virile, scoop-seeking journalist guarding her—had been passed around among the studios. MGM finally bought it, and then traded it and the services of Clark Gable to Columbia, in exchange for the use of Frank Capra for a picture that never materialized. Miriam Hopkins and Constance Bennett, appalled by the drab wardrobe selections, had both turned down the movie. Desperate to start shooting, Columbia agreed to the terms—double her usual $25,000 fee and a shooting schedule of no more than four weeks—demanded by Colbert, who was not thrilled about canceling a vacation with Louis B. Mayer's daughter Edie Goetz. Annoyed by her avarice, C carped that she had "a mind as b as a dollar, and a French appreci of its luster." Capra and Colbert not get along. "He was the one c tor she really hated," says Colbert's f the writer Leonard Gershe.

Somehow or other, the ense managed to pull itself together the sake of the movie—which, of co was rechristened *It Happened Night.* To everyone's great asto ment, the studio found it had chu out a smash hit. The movie was inated for five Academy Awards, it won in all categories: best pic best actor, best actress, best dire and best writing adaptation, a not repeated until 1975's *One Flew the Cuckoo's Nest.* The 1934 O sweep of *It Happened One Night* made even more dramatic by the that a controversy broke out w neither Bette Davis's performanc *Of Human Bondage* nor Myrna L in *The Thin Man* had been nom ed. Deferring to protesters, the a emy suspended normal voting cedures and allowed special wri ballots. As a result, Colbert harb no hopes of winning, and on night of the ceremony she was c ing a train for New York. "I wa ready aboard the Super Chief in Angeles," Colbert remembered, "w three boys from Columbia hus me into a limousine and off to old Biltmore Hotel in downtown It was a very formal affair, and t I stood in a brown traveling su and hat with my fur



Claudette was really a Renaissance woman—
a modern woman ahead of her times."



HOLLYWOOD LIVES

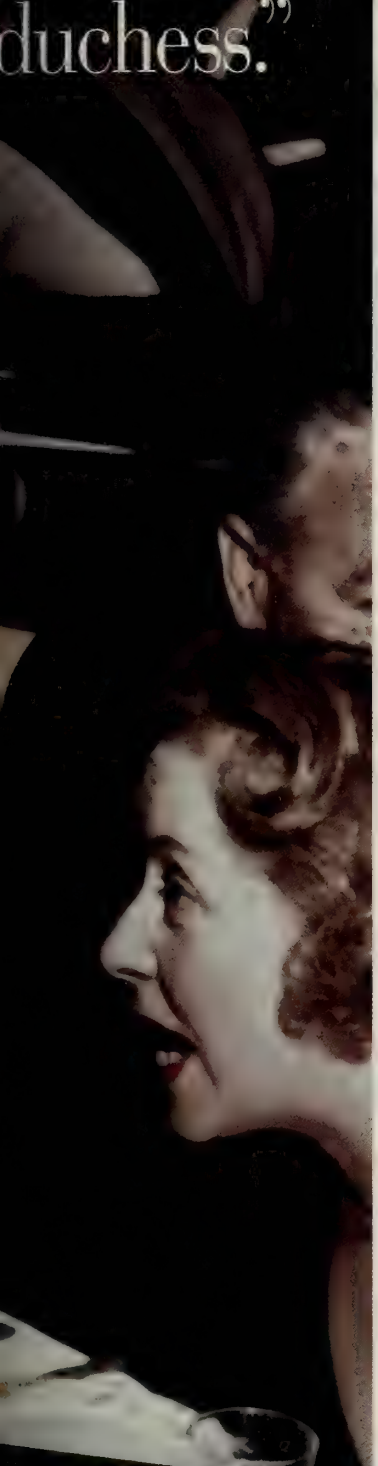
A rare shot of Colbert's right profile, at home of her Uplands Hills home, 1936. Inset, from far left: Orson Welles serenades his two-time co-star at couturier Jacques Fath's Rio Carnival party in Normandy, August 8, 1952; Colbert schmoozes with Dinah Shore and George Montgomery at the 1950 premiere of *The Magnificent Yankee*. Seated at left is director Anatole Litvak, and [illegible]

"Claudette was a mixture of a sailor a



TEA FOR TWO

Colbert at dinner circa 1948, surrounded by, clockwise from bottom left: George Burns; Jack Benny's wife, Mary Livingstone; Van Johnson; and Gracie Allen. *Inset*, Noël Coward and Colbert crossed swords on the set of his 1956 television play, *Blithe Spirit*.



over my arm." Shirley Temple presented her with the statuette, and the Super Chief was held until she returned to the station.

An ocean of ink has been spilt trying to explain the enduring magic of *It Happened One Night*—still Colbert's most famous role—much of it centered, justifiably, on the film's escapist appeal to a Depression audience. But Colbert confided in Leonard Gershe another reason for the spellbinding potency of the silver-screen chemistry. "I asked Claudette once, 'Did you like Gable?' And she gave me this funny look. 'Darling,' she said. 'I did go all the way with him. Does that answer your question?'" Gershe's story is corroborated by one other source. Barbara Sinatra says, "Minna Wallis, [producer] Hal Wallis's sister, was a casting director at Warner's, and she had all the stars go through her casting couch. When Minna told us she had been with one of Hollywood's biggest sex symbols, we pressed for more details. 'Well,' she said, holding up her pinkie, 'he was like this.' We were so disappointed! I repeated the story at lunch once when we were visiting Barbados. After lunch Claudette grabbed me and took me behind a bush. 'Minna is not the horse's mouth—I am. He was not like this,' she said, showing her little finger. 'He was like *that!*' And she spread her two hands wide apart. I guess Minna had been kidding us all along."

With *It Happened One Night,* the actress had finally crystallized her star style, both physically and technically. Billy Wilder, who co-wrote three of Colbert's movies—*Bluebeard's Eighth Wife* (1938), *Midnight* (1939), and *Arise, My Love* (1940)—says, "Claudette always knew where the joke was. She got the laughs." Leonora Hornblow adds, "It was no accident that Claudette became a star. She worked extremely hard at it. She was not Hollywood's greatest beauty, but she had something more—a face that looked like no one else's. A face that you *remembered.*"

Maintaining the Claudette Colbert look—unvarying except in historical roles—entailed an enormous amount of discipline, and more than a few power struggles. Her insistence that she be photographed only from her left side—sets had to be devised and shots established to camouflage a nearly invisible bump on the right side of her nose—induced Mary Astor to call Colbert's right profile "the other side of the moon." If anybody tried to tamper with her immutable hairdo, makeup, or hem length, she dismissed their attempts with the words "I've been in the Claudette Colbert business a long time." Paramount's cosmetics wizard Wally Westmore created the original blueprint for her face makeup. But before long, tapping her art student's knowledge of color and brushes, she surpassed the master. "I'm a good artist," Colbert told writer and photographer Michael Teague. "But every day I paint the same picture—my face."

Her hairdo was conceived by legendary Hollywood coiffeur Sydney Guilaroff, but soon enough Paramount's tonsorial experts surrendered their shears, dyes, and curlers to her. She never deviated from her signature bangs, Leonard Gershe says, because "she wanted to conceal her low forehead. She was self-conscious about it. The basic Claudette *was* Lily Chauchoin, but glamorized and turned into an 8-by-10 glossy."

Her trademark white Peter Pan collar—conspicuously evident in *It Happened One Night*—was a sartorial trick invented to elongate her short neck. (During rehearsals for the 1956 telecast of his play *Blithe Spirit,* Noël Coward told Colbert, who had been abrading his sensitive nerves, "If you



had a neck, I'd wring it.") She taught Adolfo, who dressed her frequently in the last two decades of her life, "how to make a collar so that she would not look buried in a blouse," he says. Colbert's costumes by Travis Banton for DeMille's 1934 *Cleopatra,* with their eccentric shoulder straps, were likewise engineered to disguise the same flaw.

In 1935—the first year Colbert was named one of the top 10 stars at the box office—she was paired in *The Gilded Lily* with Fred MacMurray, who would become her co-star in six more pictures. "Arthur used to say she was the only actress who could make Fred look sexy," says Leonora Hornblow. She was also teamed that year with Charles Boyer in *Private Worlds,* the second of a trio of movies they did together—and Colbert, estranged from Norman Foster and goaded by the meddlesome Mme. Chauchoin, nearly made the mistake of marrying him. "I had a mad crush on Charles, even though I couldn't understand a goddamn word he said," Colbert told Rex Reed. "He asked me to marry him several times and I told him to go back to France and get a grip on himself. But then [in 1934] I went to New York for a sinus operation and was so lonely I started to have second thoughts." At last, giving in, she phoned to accept his proposal—but she couldn't reach him as he was "on location, Poland or someplace. Four days later I wasn't feeling so bad, so I let it pass. It's just as well."

The chronic sinus condition that nearly sent her to the altar with Boyer also brought into her life the man who would become her second husband, Joel Jay "Jack" Pressman, an ear-nose-and-throat physician and U.C.L.A. professor. Colbert maintained she first met him in his office as a patient—a tale family lore contradicts. "I always heard Aunt Claudette met Uncle Jack as a result of a dinner party she gave while she was still married to Norman Foster," Coco Lewis says. "My father, like my grandmother, never liked Norman. At this dinner my father ended up hauling Foster off, flattening him out, and breaking his nose. Aunt Claudette took him to the best surgeon in town to have his nose fixed—and that turned out to be Jack Pressman." Old press clippings, which dutifully reported every ailment Colbert suffered, noted that on August 25, 1933, a D[illegible] sisted in an append[illegible] this date, it seems, th[illegible] practitioner had begun [illegible] ty of Colbert, if not of the a[illegible]

In August 1935, Colbert finally obtained a Mexican divorce from Foster, who, one newspaper item noted, had been required during their marriage to apply for a date "in the manner of an ordinary suitor." Foster had not been sitting home idly between "dates" with his wife, however; as soon as their divorce was final, he married Loretta Young's sister Sally Blane, and went on to a respectable career as a director. "Claudette was determined to make her second marriage work," Leonora Hornblow says. "She felt guilty about Norman because she had never given the marriage a fair chance. But she also held her mother responsible for ruining it." Leonard Gershe adds, "Claudette never really got over Norman. She loved the memory of their passion. It was the only time she ever really experienced it. But if she had stayed in the marriage with Norman, she never would have become Claudette Colbert. Becoming Claudette is what subdued all her sexual drive."

To reduce the waiting time required by California law and to avoid publicity, Colbert and Pressman were married by a justice of the peace in Yuma, Arizona, on Christmas Eve 1935. Shortly before, Colbert had started building a $200,000 white neo-Georgian dream house at 615 North Faring Road in Holmby Hills. Designed by the fashionable architect Wallace Neff, it was decorated with the help of costumer Adrian, Billy Haines, and Hazel Ray Davis, in an eclectic mélange of periods and modes—English, Chinese, and high Hollywood moderne. She planned for the house to accommodate her mother, who lived there initially. When Edie Goetz learned of Colbert's marriage plans, she demanded of her friend, "Do you want this marriage to work?" Colbert responded, "Of course"—provoking Goetz to exclaim, "Well then, move your mother out of the house!" Emboldened at last at age 32 to sever the apron strings, Colbert built a house for her mother nearby and installed her there in style. "She kept her mother very expensively, with a car and driver," Helen O'Hagan says. Like a dutiful French housewife, every Friday night Colbert assembled the entire clan for dinner.

The marriage between Pressman and Colbert was "companionable," Leonora Hornblow says. Both were wholly dedicated to their work, and highly distinguished in their fields. The son of a Philadelphia fabric wholesaler, Pressman had attended the University of Virginia and Harvard [illegible]dical School before going to Califor[illegible] here he helped found U.C.L.A.'s Division of Head and Neck Surgery. His deft surgical touch was so renowned t[illegible] when Samuel Goldwyn's wife, Franc[illegible] elected to have her face lifted, she insis[illegible] on Dr. Pressman. She may have reques[illegible] the kindly doctor for another reason [illegible] well. "Jack Pressman was the best-look[illegible] man, darling," Jean Howard says. "W[illegible] we used to call a 'charmer.'"

In 1938—the year Colbert, with an [illegible]gregate salary of $426,944, was named [illegible] the U.S. Treasury Department as t[illegible] second-highest wage earner in Hollywo[illegible] (after Louis B. Mayer) and the four[illegible] highest-paid corporate employee in Am[illegible]ica—the Pressmans finally found time fo[illegible] belated honeymoon. Their four-mo[illegible] holiday, which took them to Italy, Fran[illegible] and St. Anton, Austria, for skiing, w[illegible] brutally interrupted by the arrival [illegible] Nazi troops in Vienna. "German soldi[illegible] thronged the streets and people were h[illegible]ing Hitler all over the place," Colb[illegible] said. "It made me so sad and furious."

Back in Hollywood, Leonora Hornbl[illegible] recalls, "the minute she came ho[illegible] from the studio she was Mrs. Joel J[illegible] Pressman. That was the name she us[illegible] on her stationery." Early in her marria[illegible] Colbert learned not to expect her h[illegible] band to escort her to gala affairs [illegible] movie premieres. "The last premiere[illegible] took him to—oh, it was years ago," C[illegible] bert told a reporter in 1962, "I heard[illegible] loud snore. That was it. A surgeon has[illegible] hard day. Must he have to suffer at nig[illegible] too?" Pressman eventually fell so far o[illegible] of the Hollywood loop that one eveni[illegible] when he accompanied his wife to a pa[illegible] the doctor spent most of the night talki[illegible] to a blonde he had never before met. [illegible] the way home Colbert asked her husba[illegible] if he was aware whose attention he h[illegible] managed to monopolize. "No, who w[illegible] she?" he inquired. "That," she repli[illegible] "was Marilyn Monroe!"

Though Louella Parsons, with justifi[illegible] tion, rated the Pressmans' marriage "o[illegible] of Hollywood's most successful," the co[illegible] ple did experience their share of tribu[illegible] tions. "They wanted very much to ha[illegible] children. But by the time they started t[illegible] ing, it was too late," says Helen Pressma[illegible] the widow of Jack's attorney broth[illegible] Harold. "It was very sad." The proble[illegible] it seems, was not just that Colbert h[illegible] postponed motherhood for the sake of h[illegible] career. Pressman may also have been re[illegible] dered sterile as a result of contracting t[illegible] mumps at age 19. At one point the cou[illegible] considered adoption. "Some twins ca[illegible] on the market out in Hollywood," [illegible] friend remembers. "Through his medic[illegible] connections, Jack heard about them. B[illegible]

he last minute they changed their
ds. Those twins turned out to be the
Joan Crawford took."

erhaps it was Colbert's frustration at
being deprived of a child, or maybe
as only the usual temptations of Hol-
ood, that led her, just twice, to con-
plate actions that might have jeopar-
d her marriage. Colbert always spoke
iringly of Ray Milland, with whom
made three films, and it was proba-
with as much coquettish regret as
egial respect that she recalled him.
le they were making *Skylark* (1941),
and, an irresistible Lothario, proposi-
ed her. After some hesitation Colbert
ly consented to an assignation at her
etary's apartment in Westwood. "On
way there, she said to herself, 'No, I
can't do it.' And she turned around
drove home," says a Hollywood
ce. "Claudette's problem, you see,
that she just could not lie. It was not
er character."
the early 40s during a trip to Sun
ey (where Colbert's skiing prowess was
wned), she suddenly became infatuat-
ith a powerful film-industry executive.
s one intimate claims, she briefly con-
plated a liaison with this man, she
kly came to her senses when Pressman
me a commander in the Navy Med-
Corps, stationed as a flight surgeon
Pacific battleship. In the end, the
d concludes, "Claudette never, never
ted on Jack."
ollywood folklorists, at least since
40s, have recurrently linked Marlene
rich's name to Colbert's. Columnist
Smith theorizes that the legend of a
hic romance between the two Para-
nt divas probably can be traced back
much-published photograph of Diet-
and Colbert sliding down a "chute-
chute" together, the French actress
fortably wedged between her Ger-
counterpart's bare and shapely legs.
pped in 1935 at a party Carole Lom-
gave at a seaside amusement park,
picture has evolved over the years
a kind of lesbian talisman. Leonard
she says, "Claudette said some photog-
er pushed her up there. Anyway,
lene and Claudette didn't even like
other. Dietrich described her as
ugly Claudette Colbert, so shopgirl
ich.'" Jean Howard also rejects the
or completely. "Claudette was *not* a
ical girl." As resistant to debunking
host myths, the canard of Colbert
Dietrich's supposed affair has as-
ed a life of its own. Just two weeks
Colbert's death, the *National Enquir-*



PARADISE FOUND

Left, Bellerive, Colbert's Barbados retreat, which she purchased in 1960. *Below,* Colbert with friends adman Peter Rogers and Helen O'Hagan at the Sarah Siddons Society awards in Chicago, 1981.



er ran a story, tossing in Garbo's name for good measure, headlined SECRET CLAUDETTE COLBERT TOOK TO HER GRAVE—SHE WAS A LESBIAN.

During the war, Colbert—whose per-picture rate now hovered between $150,000 and $200,000—made about two movies a year. Simultaneously, she volunteered with the Red Cross, participated in the Hollywood Victory Caravan, and fretted about relatives stranded in occupied France. In 1942's *The Palm Beach Story,* Colbert proved herself at 39 still to be, in Graham Greene's words, "the most charming light comedy actress on the screen." Colbert's one great wartime picture, for which she received an Academy Award nomination, was David O. Selznick's synoptic *Since You Went Away* (1944), intended to apotheosize the women at the home front in the same way that his *Gone with the Wind* had exalted the belles of the Civil War. For Hollywood aficionados, the enormously costly parable ($3.257 million) is best remembered as the backdrop against which producer Selznick, then 41 and married, launched his tumultuous love affair with 24-year-old Jennifer Jones—even as he oversaw the performance of Robert Walker, his paramour's husband and the father of her two children, in the same film. Further snarling this tangled skein of emotions, Selznick, early in the production, made an awkward pass at Colbert, with the result that the great filmmaker ended up writing a letter of apology to Pressman.

Jennifer Jones reflects: "Considering that she was a friend of Irene Selznick's [David O.'s wife] and Edie Goetz [his sister-in-law], Claudette was always very charming and delightful to me. When we were shooting the scene with the three of us walking together in a railroad station—Claudette in the middle, Shirley Temple and me on either side—she looked down and said, 'Well! There are three pairs of pretty good-looking legs here.' It gave me quite a boost! I tell you, she was a grand lady—a mensch professionally. She couldn't have been friendlier to a neophyte—especially, if you will, one who was a scarlet woman."

In 1944, after 14 years, Colbert's contract with Paramount expired. Her last movie for the studio was a vapid comedy, *Practically Yours,* which coupled her again with Fred MacMurray, and though Colbert acknowledged the studio's generosity, she was exhilarated to be independent at last. "I believe that I have reached a stage where nothing is gained by a long-term contract," she remarked. "Now I am going to do what I wish."

One of the best decisions she made after her liberation from her studio was to take the starring role in *Tomorrow Is Forever* (1946), opposite Orson Welles. Parisian playwright Pierre Barillet says he had heard that while enacting the film's most melodramatic scene, Colbert leaned her lugubrious face on Welles's knee as directed—only to discover that the actor, as a prank, had put a balloon inside his pants and was pumping it up to make it look as if he were getting an erection. "When I asked her about the episode," Barillet says, "she refused to discuss it. Where sex was concerned, she was very delicate. Yet, at the same time, she loved to use slang words in other contexts."

Patricia Medina (Mrs. Joseph Cotten), who had a small part in another of Colbert's 1946 releases, *The Secret Heart,* says, "Claudette loved to swear! If you ask me, she was a mixture of a sailor and a duchess. We had been rehearsing together for a week. Came the day we were to

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shoot, I was finally called onto the set. I said, 'Good morning, Miss Colbert.' She replied, 'Who the fuck are you?' I looked behind me and realized she was talking to *me*. 'I'm Patricia Medina. We've been rehearsing all week.' 'Well, what the Devil have you done with your face?' she demanded. I explained that I had just come from the makeup man. 'Go wash your face!' she shouted. I told her I couldn't—he was so nice, he had worked so awfully hard. And she asked, 'Do you want to be a star in the makeup room or on the screen?' It was true—MGM had a set face that made everyone look like Margaret O'Brien. Then, toward the end of the day they were doing a shot over my shoulder of Claudette's face. At five, she says, 'O.K., that's it. I'm out of here!' The cameraman said, 'Miss Colbert, just one last close-up.' And she said, 'They've seen close-ups of me for 20 years. Why not do one of what *I've* been looking at?'—and she left. Claudette Colbert was BIG—and as honest as the California sun."

Colbert had two good reasons for her proviso—not unusual among stars—that she be off the set by five o'clock. First, as she was now past 40, she felt that her face would look fatigued by that hour. Second, she wanted to go home to Jack. Because she was so inflexible on this point, however, she ended up losing a job she badly needed to maintain her standing in Hollywood. In 1947, buoyed up by her latest—and, as it turned out, her last—commercial success, a back-to-the-farm farce called *The Egg and I* (the penultimate Colbert-MacMurray vehicle), Colbert was next lined up to play the wife in Frank Capra's *State of the Union* opposite Spencer Tracy. But Capra, refusing to grant her the five P.M. cutoff time, brought in Katharine Hepburn instead.

Possibly the real culprit in the *State of the Union* debacle was neither Capra nor Hepburn, but Colbert's brother. True to form, Mme. Chauchoin had broken up her daughter's thriving working relationship with Feldman by insisting that she employ her son as an agent instead. "My brother, Charles, God bless his soul, was my agent," Colbert told Rex Reed. "And God save me." Leonora Hornblow says pointedly, "Charles was incompetent. His mother built him up so much he just assumed everyone else was jealous of him. My husband told Claudette, 'He is losing good opportunities for you.' Everyone who knew her and cared about her said the same thing." Eventually, Colbert mustered the courage to fire him, but not before more damage was done.

The next blow to Colbert's star status came as a result of an injury she sustained while filming *Three Came Home* (1950), a harrowing real-life account of a woman's internment in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp. Colbert took the film's gritty realism so much in earnest that for the sake of authenticity she allowed herself to appear sweaty and unkempt, and even permitted the forbidden shots of her right profile. But she carried her quest for verisimilitude too far when, on the last day of shooting, she insisted on playing her own violent rape scene rather than enlist a stuntwoman for the task. "I ruptured a disc, cracked a vertebra, and landed in the hospital," she told Rex Reed. It might all have been worth her while—she earned critical plaudits for her efforts—but for the fact that she was slated to begin shooting Twentieth Century Fox's *All About Eve* immediately afterward, playing the role of Margo Channing, a character that had been written for her. "Fox couldn't have been nicer," Colbert told a reporter. "They waited two months for me, and Joe Mankiewicz, the director, was adorable. . . . Eventually they went with Bette Davis, who was fantastic, as you well know." Today it is nearly impossible to imagine anyone but Bette Davis incarnating that superb role. Yet Joseph Mankiewicz's casting of Anne Baxter as Eve Harrington makes much more sense in light of his intention for Colbert to play the malevolent sycophant's mentor. "Joe's idea originally was that Anne Baxter as a young girl looked very much like me," Colbert said. "And that was the point of it, that this young girl had this fixation about this actress. . . . When Bette did the role, it became a whole different thing. . . . I cried for two years over that."

In 1982, at the American Film Institute's tribute to Frank Capra in L.A. (Colbert and he had finally reconciled), the actress was waiting for an elevator when Bette Davis suddenly stung her with the barbed remark "I got even, didn't I?" Colbert recalled to Reed, "She never recovered from the fact that in 1934, when she was up for *Of Human Bondage,* I won the Oscar for *It Happened One Night.* Then, years later, she got the role of Margo Channing, which would have been one of the plum roles of *my* career. She had been sitting on this thing for 50 years and I had forgotten all about it! Oh well, as I have always said, the best roles were bitches, and she proved it."

Taking advantage of a U.S. law that allowed a portion of income earned abroad to remain untaxed, Colbert went to Europe from 1951 to 1953 to make two movies, *Outpost in Malaya* and *Daughters of Destiny.* Though her film career had slipped into an irreversible decline financially, at least, she was in excellent shape. On weekends the Pressmans would fly to their Palm Springs country house in the Beechcraft Bonanza single-engine plane that Colbert had given her husband as a present. They also bought a ranch in Northern California, where the doctor devoted himself to raising show cattle. Colbert bought a cottage in Cap-Ferrat, too, reasoning that it would look too ostentatious if she traveled to France simply to buy her custom-made Anglisano shoes in Paris. "Claudette was extravagant," says adman Peter Rogers. "I never, ever saw her question the price of anything."

Solvent enough to turn down a million-dollar broadcast deal with NBC in 1[illegible], Colbert nonetheless was not above lending her talents to the young medium of television. Among her several television theatrical engagements in the 50s was Noël Coward's *Blithe Spirit* of 1956, starring Lauren Bacall as the ghost who which occasioned the disgruntled Bacall wright's infamous remark about her [illegible]: "The problem between her and Noël Coward was that he expected her to be letter-perfect each day at rehearsals, and Claudette insisted on holding the script," Leonard Gershe says. Tired of Coward's relentless badgering, Colbert one day said in self-defense, "I know my part backwards." To which he replied, "And that's exactly how you're reading it."

That same year, Colbert made her Broadway comeback, filling in for Margaret Sullavan for two months in Carson Green's *Janus,* at the Plymouth Theater. "I've wanted to get back on the stage for a long time," Colbert told the *New York Journal-American,* "but you know my husband. He didn't want me away." Husband or no, once Colbert reverted to the theater, there was no turning back. In 1[illegible] she was reunited with Charles Boyer in Leslie Stevens's *The Marriage-Go-Round,* which ran for 450 performances and toured 13 states. She returned regularly to the theater up through the mid-80s. (Her last show was 1985's *Aren't We All?* with Rex Harrison, which traveled through the country and for five months in Australia.) "I was on the screen for 30 years and never did get used to getting up at five in the morning," she explained. "In the theater you stay up late, and you sleep late in the morning. It's a delicious life."

'Claudette was so smart—she knew right moment to leave Hollywood," s Leonard Gershe. "She arrived at t realization at a dinner at the Goetz- in 1958. Natalie Wood came around l kissed us all good night, saying she s leaving because she had to be in keup at six A.M. I saw a look come er Claudette's face—she had set her nd. 'What the hell do I need to be e for?' she asked herself. 'I'll probably er have to be in makeup again at six .'" Observes Nancy Reagan, who t met Colbert in 1950 at the house of GM chief Dore Schary, "I admire udette. She had the sense to know en to pull back."

1958, while Colbert was in Europe vaiting for her Paris wardrobe for *The rriage-Go-Round*, she entered into a atile and complicated friendship with oman which she came to regret bitter- One evening at a nightclub on Capri, bert struck up a conversation with a ilthy painter and photographer named na Hull, the daughter of Garbo's psy- atrist, Dr. Vernon Herbst, and the daughter of a Sears Roebuck heiress. ll's opening line to Colbert was "I s my car"—a Lincoln Continental that had exchanged with Sammy Davis Jr. his Thunderbird. Colbert—who had n friendly with Frank Sinatra and his Pack ever since the singer's pal Pat Cicco latched onto the movie star a train ride to California—replied, "I ve that car once, down to Frank Sina- s in Palm Springs. I liked it so much I t out and bought one just like it in ." They saw each other a second e, and, delighted by Hull's backstage t after the opening of *The Marriage-Round* at the Plymouth Theatre, Col- t called Jean Howard for Hull's tele- ne number. From that moment on, two became inseparable. They painted ether, traveled together, and even rent- twin penthouses at 136 East 64th eet, which the dress designer Sophie nbel of Saks Fifth Avenue (owned by husband's family) found for them r her own town house. The friend- flowered because of their mutual rest in art, and because Colbert, se theatrical obligations now kept apart from her husband for months time, "loathed being alone—it was a of paranoia. All those years living her mother made her incapable of ude," says Pierre Barillet.

Around 1960, Hull, Colbert, Alfred Jeanne Vanderbilt, and Colbert's old *slaughter* director, George Abbott (a onetime flame of Hull's), went on holiday to Puerto Rico. On a whim, Hull and Colbert cut the vacation short and flew from that island to Barbados. Not long before, Colbert, seeking relief from her irritated sinuses, had visited Noël Coward in Jamaica. She felt so well at Coward's that she made up her mind to buy a house there. But then stage designer Oliver Messel, a Barbados resident, intervened, suggesting that she might find his island even more to her taste. "The minute she got off the plane in Barbados, she just knew that was where she wanted to spend the rest of her life," says Leonard Gershe. Almost immediately Colbert found the house she wanted. Called Burwains and owned by a white-haired British gentleman named Sir Rupert Briarcliff, it was the island's only plantation house fronting the beach.

To help pay for the house that would become Bellerive, Colbert accepted a role in her last movie, *Parrish* (1961), co-starring Karl Malden and Troy Donahue. Every day Hull, who ended up buying the modest house next door to Bellerive, would drive Colbert from Manhattan up to the movie's location in the Connecticut tobacco fields. Sophie Gimbel created Colbert's wardrobe for the movie, and it was at this time that Gimbel's young friend and protégée at Saks, Helen O'Hagan, became acquainted with the actress. "Working with Troy Donahue really finished her off with the movies," Peter Rogers says. She felt "he treated her like an old lady."

Colbert planned for Bellerive to be the Shangri-la where she and Pressman—whose employer, U.C.L.A., enforced mandatory retirement at age 67—would finally be able to slow down and enjoy each other's company. They sold the Holmby Hills residence in 1963 (many of the furnishings from North Faring Road were installed at Bellerive), and Pressman rented a small house on Readcrest Drive in Beverly Hills. When he came to Bellerive, Pressman gardened—Colbert had bought a plot of land across the street, which he planted with fruit trees—and tinkered with his boat. "One day I was helping Jack move his boat," Chinese-art dealer Bob Ellsworth recalls. "I proposed that, after his sabbatical started, he should come with me to Bangkok and have shipbuilders there make him a new boat. His response was 'What did Claudette say?' I explained I hadn't asked her yet. He said, 'No one in our entire life has ever asked me first.' I think that says a lot about their marriage. It wasn't that she was the boss—she was the star."

At Bellerive, Colbert was frequently hostess to neighbors Pamela and Averell Harriman, Drue and John Heinz, and Ronald and Marietta Tree and their friends Bill and Babe Paley. Slim Keith and Lillian Hellman visited often, as did Princess Margaret, who stayed with her chum Verna Hull. "Claudette was so warm and generous, she drew people to her like a hearth," says Leonora Hornblow.

At some point during Colbert's friendship with Hull, rumors sprang up concerning the exact nature of their relationship. "Paris, London, New York—the whole world was talking," says one observer. Hull had even forewarned Colbert that people might misinterpret their friendship, but somehow it never registered with the actress as a real possibility. Leonora Hornblow says, "She felt so secure in who she was, it never occurred to her people actually *would* talk. When it finally got back to her what people were saying, she was appalled. She screamed! She said, 'I thought everyone knew I liked men.'" And was there any truth to these speculations? "Claudette was *not* someone you take liberties with," Hornblow says. "Not even with a surgical mask and rubber gloves!" another friend exclaims. Gershe adds, "Claudette loved to flirt with men but she liked women for companionship. The women in Claudette's life were never lovers—they were more like ladies-in-waiting. Claudette was always curious about everyone else's sex life. But for her it was like listening to fairy tales. I wondered whether it wasn't to compensate for the fact there was really nothing going on in her own life." Partly on Gershe's advice, she kept Hull in her life—but soon, as Hornblow says, Colbert would "rue the day she ever became friends with Verna."

In 1966, when Frank Sinatra decided to spend one of his several honeymoons with Mia Farrow at Bellerive, Colbert converted a small outbuilding on the property into a guest cottage. Claudette threw the newlyweds a big party, and Sinatra—who Mia Farrow says "was always on his best behavior with Claudette"—cooked a spaghetti-and-meatball dinner. But after three days, Colbert said, Farrow and Sinatra "were barely speaking to each other. The night I found Mia wandering on the beach, her hair soaking wet from the rain . . . I could see the handwriting on the wall." Colbert led Farrow up the outside stairs to her bedroom and dried her hair. The problem, it emerged, was that Farrow had just been

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offered a part abroad in the film *A Dandy in Aspic,* and she didn't know if Sinatra would accompany her if she accepted. "You *should* work," Colbert advised her. "But don't *ever* let Frank see you like this." Farrow says, "Claudette was quick to mother me, soothe Frank. She seemed perfect. What did Claudette Colbert ever do wrong?"

By the holiday season of 1967, Pressman had at last moved from California permanently and joined his wife at Bellerive. But already, on the plane to Barbados, he was not well. Pressman was diagnosed with liver cancer, and his condition deteriorated rapidly. As he lay dying, Colbert received a strange bulletin from Frank de Buono, her estate manager. Via a letter, Verna Hull had begged him to warn Colbert that Pressman might at any moment seize the gun from the Bellerive safe and kill her, possibly himself too, in order to take her with him when he died. Offended and incredulous, Colbert marched through the opening in the fence that separated her property from Hull's, exhorting her neighbor's startled maid: "Tell your mistress I will never see her or speak to her again for the rest of my life!" And to make sure Hull knew she meant to stand by her words, she returned everything Hull had ever given her during their nine-year friendship.

Pressman had never been happy about Hull—Mia Farrow says the doctor used to refer to Hull as "the monster." Probably he disliked her for the same reason he felt uneasy about socialite Jerry Zipkin. A friend says, "Claudette was always quoting Zipkin, referring to him" in a way that threatened not only Pressman's own pre-eminence in her life but her own dominion over herself. "The end of her friendship with Hull was histrionic—and final," says the same observer. "But because Claudette behaved like a woman scorned," the rumors flared up again, with even greater virulence. Where once there had been only a fence, a wall went up separating the two properties, and, as one witness said, "the island was divided in two."

To hasten her husband to California for treatment, Colbert asked Sinatra to send his Learjet to Barbados. [illegible] vehicle was being used [illegible] chums to the Rose Bow[illegible] called to Rex Reed, Sinatra instead "sent a passenger plane" staffed with a U.C.L.A. medical crew. It cost her $27,500, she noted—and "a week later the press praised him for flying Dr. Joel Jay Pressman to U.C.L.A. at his own expense. Sinatra never denied it. It was the only time I was ever upset by him."

Pressman died on February 26, 1968, two weeks after his 67th birthday, leaving his widow, in her words, "completely shattered." Pressman's body was flown back to Barbados and placed, at his request, above ground in a travertine mausoleum, designed by Colbert, in the cemetery of St. Peter's Church, not far from Bellerive. Her mother, in her early 90s and infirm, came to live with her. She broke her hip, and was an obstreperous patient. When Mme. Chauchoin stubbornly refused to take food one day, Colbert's maid, Marie, told her, "But Madame insists you must eat something." The dowager demanded, "Who is this 'Madame' you keep referring to?" Marie answered, "Your daughter." To which the elderly woman replied, "*I* am the only Mme. Colbert. Peepee on my daughter!" Helen O'Hagan says, "All those years the mother was really living vicariously through Claudette." Leonard Gershe adds, "She felt it all should have happened to *her.*" The redoubtable old matriarch finally died in April 1970, "of boredom," Colbert said, and her ashes were laid to rest in an elaborate stone urn near the foot of her son-in-law's tomb.

Colbert's brother, Charles, died the following year, and for the first time in her life Colbert was relieved—physically and financially if not spiritually—of her burdensome family. "It's a strange feeling," Colbert reflected, "when you're suddenly free and nobody really cares where you go or what you do." Seeking her roots, she took an apartment in Paris on the Rue Raynouard, where she spent the autumn season from around 1970 to 1975, at the same time maintaining a Manhattan rental. "But she got bored and depressed in Paris," says Pierre Barillet. "All her friends were working."

In 1974 she returned again to the theater with Jerome Chodorov's *A Community of Two,* but not before traveling to L.A. to have her neck lifted—the only plastic surgery she ever seems to have had. "When I saw her afterwards I told her she had wasted her money," says Peter Rogers, for whose "What Becomes a Legend Most?" Blackglama advertising campaign she posed twice. "I couldn't see any difference. Claudette somehow had already mastered the illusion of youth."

Colbert's preternatural agelessness constantly extolled in the favorable tices she received for her plays. W she opened in *The Kingfisher* with Harrison in 1978, the New York *D News* gushed that she "was the lady time forgot."

An invitation to Bellerive beca among top-drawer social types, of the most coveted, status-confer destinations on the map, particularly ter the Reagans' Easter visit in 1982. Claudette was a great believer in rout the activities at Bellerive during the P ident and First Lady's visit progres very much according to custom. Colb habitually breakfasted alone by her b room, emerging just before lunch tidiously made up and meticulo coiffed—the face and hair required hour. Twice a day she would swim backstroke for half an hour, wearin bathing cap, a long-sleeved leotard protect her arms from the sun), and full maquillage. Lunch was served in pagoda on Pierre Deux place mats, took place at five, drinks were passed fore dinner, and in the evening guests their meal indoors, where finger bo and her Spode Darlington or Cr Derby china were de rigueur. "She'd so nervous that everything had to be peccable," says Leonard Gershe. went into hysterics the day Brooke As who was staying with Pamela Harrim came over for tea—and Mrs. Astor ne even went indoors. She had a fit, too, fore Joan Collins and Robin Hurlst visited in 1992. But the minute she he them coming up the stairs, the actres Claudette took over. Leonora whispe to me, 'The curtain's going up!' She r ly was vulnerable."

If Colbert happened to be alone at Be rive—"She hated seeing those bl spaces on her guest calendar," s costume-jewelry executive John Kl schmidt—she would ask Marie to m into the green bedroom opposite hers. would sometimes also request that friends the collectors Emilia and Alighi de Micheli, who had their own house Barbados, occupy the guest cottage fo week or 10 days to keep her compa And during her stays in New York, wh she now had a rental apartment on F Avenue, Helen O'Hagan took to sle ing on the living-room sofa so Colb wouldn't be alone. In 1984, Colbert graded to a two-bedroom apartment the same building, and O'Hagan mo in. "I was working at Saks and had to

ed much earlier than Claudette. But if saw that I had fallen asleep, she'd e me up in order to talk. She needed ebody with her all the time," O'Ha- says. "There was a 27-year age differ- between us. So I was like her daugh- We were very lucky to find each oth- that time in our lives."

ubstituting them for her real kin, Clau- drew into her sphere what she d her "family of friends." To their ble homages were added institutional lades from around the world. In she received Chicago's Sarah Sid- Society award, and in 1984, the year as her Lincoln Center Film So- tribute, a building at the Kaufman ria Studios in Queens, where she had e her first Paramount movies, was ed for her. Her native country deco- l her with the Legion of Honor in , which she cherished at least as n as her Oscar. And in 1989 the Ken- Center for the Performing Arts pre- ed her with an award for lifetime evement in the arts, a distinction h Nancy Reagan says she "had ed hard for" during her husband's inistration. At the ceremony Gregory commended Colbert as "the best we've gotten from France since the ie of Liberty."

olbert had one last crack at acting, ing a blueblood matron who protects nomicidal daughter-in-law in the 1987 mini-series *The Two Mrs. Grenvilles,* d on the best-selling novel by Dom- Dunne. "She truly fought for the " Dunne says. "It was the first time in s a lead role for an older woman was able. The producer wanted Loretta ng, but then she turned it down. Gin- Rogers, Joan Fontaine, Bette Davis, ia de Havilland, Jane Wyman—they anted it." Colbert triumphed over her petitors, and the Golden Globe she for her portrayal found a place near Oscar at Bellerive.

ve had a lovely life," Colbert re- narked in her 80s. "I've been blessed. only bad thing is that my husband much too soon." But Colbert under- one last reversal: in March of 1993 suffered a debilitating stroke. O'Ha- put Colbert in the hospital, where the ss spent 17 days, and hired three pri- nurses to minister to her at home. Af- eaving work for seven weeks, O'Ha- finally took early retirement from to care for her partially paralyzed d two weeks out of every month. The nded "family of friends" rallied. "We down to spell Helen," Liz Smith says. "Her post-stroke look was not bad at all," says Kleinschmidt. "Fortunately, she didn't suffer any facial disfigurement. Her speech was a little slurred at first, but she got over the impediment. And she tried very, very hard, without any success, to learn to walk again." She continued to entertain at Bellerive, though she often sat, in the midst of convivial gatherings, as aloofly mute as a sphinx. Early in 1996, producer A. C. Lyles wrote her a note filling her in on what had become of such old Paramount cronies as John Engstead and Wally Westmore—and Colbert sent the reply, "I'm 92 and in a wheelchair, but I look just great. If you find a good part for an actress in a wheelchair, please let me know."

Early in the evening on Sunday, July 28, 1996—almost three and a half years after the stroke—O'Hagan, just back in Manhattan from a weekend in northwestern Connecticut with Bill Blass, got the call "I had been fearing," she says. "She was waiting for me. She did not want to leave this world without me next to her." O'Hagan flew to Barbados and spent the night on the floor beside Colbert's bed. On July 30, at 3:15 P.M., Colbert died while looking out the window to the sea. Beulah, the cook, collapsed in a faint. Catherine, the second cook, threw herself on the floor, sobbing. The priest, Father Jim Grear, asked for everybody to join hands. Colbert's body was shipped to New York for cremation. As they watched Colbert's remains enter the belly of an American Airlines aircraft, Michael Teague turned to O'Hagan and said, "I guess it's the only time she's ever flown in the back of a plane."

Colbert's ashes were placed in a mahogany box and deposited inside Dr. Pressman's tomb—at a decorous distance from Mme. Chauchoin's urn. There is a space reserved there for Marie, to whom Colbert left $75,000. Her niece Coco Lewis was remembered in the will with $150,000, and a trust worth more than $100,000 was bequeathed in Pressman's memory to U.C.L.A. Apart from some jewelry, paintings, and furniture—which were distributed among the "family of friends"—the rest of the estate, the bulk of which is Bellerive, was left to Helen O'Hagan, who "deserved it a million times over," Pierre Barillet says. (Last July, O'Hagan vacated the house to make way for mogul David Geffen, who purchased Bellerive in May for over $2 million and then resold it in August to a midwestern couple.) The New York memorial service, organized by O'Hagan, at St. Vincent Ferrer, where the actress had been confirmed, attracted not only the intimate circle but also such notable acquaintances and friends as Bill Blass, Liz Smith, Geoffrey Beene, and Dominick Dunne. At Barillet's smaller service for her at a church on Paris's Faubourg St.-Honoré, Pamela Harriman, Mme. René Clair, and Lauren Bacall all paid their respects.

Leonard Gershe remembers attending a benefit for the Italian Red Cross in Venice in 1983, graced by a royal flush of stars. "It was in honor of Ingrid Bergman, on the first anniversary of her death. Claudette and I were leaving the Gritti Palace hotel one day for lunch, and there was such a crush of paparazzi, you couldn't move. One photographer popped out of the horde, and shouted, right in Claudette's face, 'Miss Colbert, I'm from *Oggi.* I can put you in *Oggi.*' Claudette replied, with a charming little smile, 'Baby, I don't need you anymore.' And she walked away so fast, all the photographers collapsed on one another like dominoes. In poker terms, Claudette knew exactly when to fold." Unlike Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, who descended into camp self-parody making kitschy horror movies, or Garbo and Dietrich, who wound up reclusive relics, only Colbert, until the end, "did a great job at life," Coco Lewis says. "She did everything right."

Peter Rogers reflects, "She had a terrible, wonderful lust for life. She was not like the other movie queens of her era. Crawford, whom I also knew well, wanted to be a lady even more than a movie star. Claudette *was* a lady." Leonora Hornblow agrees: "The difference between her and the others is that she had a background. She had a strong family sense—sometimes to the detriment of her happiness. But she knew who she was. She was a real live person. There was somebody there."

Helen O'Hagan continues to receive Claudette Colbert fan mail. Most letters come from devotees still not aware of her death, who were not yet born when Colbert made her last movie, *Parrish.* And in Barbados, tourists on the beach still crawl under the sea grapes choking the path leading to Bellerive, hoping for a glimpse of the fabled house. Not long ago, during a visit to St. Peter's cemetery, O'Hagan encountered a sunburned young couple on holiday from the North of England making a solemn pilgrimage to the film star's grave site. Decades ago, musing on her fame, Colbert said, "To be celebrated is nothing. To be loved is everything." □

DiCaprio

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 75 they probably didn't mind the shower. To them, *Titanic* or dinghy, he was and would always be Leo the Babe.

The fact is, there are lots of ways to see Leonardo Wilhelm DiCaprio, but only one matters. Certainly he is the party boy who digs late nights at hangouts such as L.A.'s Sky Bar and who loves trolling for runway beauties. (His longest relationship, about 15 months, involved model Kristen Zang, who formerly dated Nick Cage.) And certainly those who see him as a celebrity treated with deference, rolling up with an entourage or bragging about his perks, tend to dismiss him as just a jerk. And you can't deny that he's had his fun with interviewers (as when he sarcastically said in 1996, "Oh yeah, once I became famous, *bam,* I just dumped my old friends"). Nor can you ignore the daredevil in Leo (who in the midst of *The Man in the Iron Mask* went racing in all-terrain vehicles with a friend, who broke his fibula), the guy who refuses to rein in his lust for skydiving, bungee jumping, and the like. ("Leo's no pussy," says Johnson in defense. "But he doesn't have a death wish, either.") Indeed, you might say that he will entertain any reasonable risk to demonstrate that he is still a regular guy.

But—and this is the essential thing to know about DiCaprio—despite the frenzy exploding around him, he remains serenely cocooned in his familiar, comfortable lifestyle. He still lives with his German-born mother, Irmelin, in a ranch house in Los Feliz not far from their old, rougher neighborhood, near the water-mattress motels of Hollywood Boulevard. His relationship with his divorced parents (his father, George, a former comic-book distributor, is involved in his son's career) is so open that it would read like bunkum if it didn't appear to be true. Although DiCaprio is a millionaire—his back-end picture deals have brought him "first dollar" returns in the high seven figures—he has a coupon clipper's sense of thrift, spending his money mainly on computer and video equipment and the occasional sport-utility vehicle. "Leo's cheap," says Ethan Suplee. "I feel funny saying that, but I've said it to him. But he'll look for a place in the street to park rather than use valet parking."

And contrary to his flippant quotes, DiCaprio has *not* dumped all his old friends. "He's one of the most loyal people I know," says Claire Danes. "It's one of his most marked characteristics." His friends are all—in their horseplay, truthfulness, and risk taking—his constant reality. As Jonah Johnson says, "Outside the house he may be famous, but inside he's no longer famous. He's just Leo the jerk, like us."

All of which is why, as Twentieth Century Fox and Paramount prepare to roll out their $200 million extravaganza, the only person who remains stubbornly, serenely outside the groove of the big rub-a-dub-dub is Leonardo. "Little does Leo know what's going to happen when *Titanic* comes out," says Tobey Maguire. "I mean, it's huge. And it's not going to be just 12-year-old girls watching him. It's going to be *everyone*."

"The curious thing is, I actually didn't want Leo at first," Jim Cameron says. "Leo was recommended by the studios, as were other young, hot actors. . . . He didn't strike me as necessarily having the qualities that I wanted for my Jack."

Cameron's possessiveness is understandable; he spent five years researching the R.M.S. *Titanic* to perfect his vision of the film. In 1995, equipped with a special camera, the director made 12 dives to the site of the wreck in the North Atlantic, filming shots for the movie's contemporary sequences. He consulted the ship's original blueprints, obtained from its builders, Harland & Wolff of Belfast, and—on the premise that every picture needs one—contrived a boy-meets-girl story between Rose, Winslet's tightly corseted Edwardian honeypot, and the strictly steerage Jack.

It was vital to Cameron that Jack be played by someone with big-screen charisma. And that didn't sound like Leonardo. "But," says Cameron, "I met him and basically just loved him. He can quickly charm a group of people without doing anything obvious. . . . The second I met him I was convinced."

When I first meet DiCaprio he is finishing up a photo session at a dance hall in Hollywood, and chatting with his mother, an attractive blonde who has come by with Leo's grandmother Helena, whom everyone calls Oma. The thing I notice right away is how natural he is around them. You get the idea there is nothing about himself he has to hide. David Blaine, a magician who is one of Leo's New York buddies, confirms this: "Leo has a wonderful truthfulness about him. Even just the way he is with his mother and grandmother." The same is true when he is with his dad Caprio's pack, in fact, apologetically scribe the young actor's relationship his parents as corny, or at least not a ceptional. As director Randall Wa says, "Anybody ought to love their ents. But if you look at what it is a them that he most treasures, you g real window into who he is. And talking about this goodness of heart this honesty."

After DiCaprio changes out of photo attire and into his jeans and T-s we board a limo furnished for the s and drive a few blocks to a piano ba Vermont Avenue. Outside the Dresd couple of onlookers shoot Leo glances, but inside, the five or six pat at the bar are engrossed in a baske game on TV. We slide into a horses shaped booth and DiCaprio orde 7Up. Although he is very handsome, has the smoothest skin I've seen on one over the age of four, DiCaprio is noticeably vain. "He's probably world's most beautiful-looking man he doesn't think that he's gorgeous," Kate Winslet. "And to me, he's smelly, farty Leo."

And he avoids the Hugh Grant l of tossing a forelock by securing it w tiny wire headband. "I've been wea this for many years, since I was 18, says. "It's the most masculine one I c find, the most discreet."

From the beginning, says DiCapri had doubts about doing "a big-bu Hollywood movie," but overcame mo them after meeting Cameron and lea that Winslet was involved. Cameron, cunningly, challenged his reluctant st telling him that acting involves more quirky characters. "Look, in a way, t the easy stuff," Cameron remember vising, "because you've got shit to hid hind. When you're playing someone is very clear . . . you have to make scenes work from a place of purity."

Yet nothing could have prepared cast, which also includes Kathy Bates Billy Zane, for the grinding pace scenes of mayhem so chillingly real at a screening I attended many in th dience gasped. "It was hard to focu really was," says DiCaprio, lighting a arette. "I remember how they got scene ready in about two hours, an of a sudden I'm being, like, towed u the back of a poop deck with a har around my waist. There's, like, 200 e cabled on with bungee cords, stunt ready to fall off and hit the cushi girders. And then there's three cr

le's probably the world's most beautiful-looking nan," says Kate Winslet.



CREATURE COMFORTS

"I spent four months with him and couldn't figure him out," says *Romeo and Juliet* co-star Claire Danes. "I still can't figure out whether he's really transparent or incredibly complex. I think he's the latter, but I don't know." DiCaprio and his pet lizard, Blizz, in L.A., April 1997.

d us with huge spotlights. Kate and looked at each other like, How did t here?"

anic is not just a big picture, it is a astly entertaining one. The contem- y sequences with Bill Paxton as a re hunter wrap ingeniously around 12 narrative and keep things steam- Much of the credit also goes to prio and Winslet, whose sexual chem- reates a seductive undertow through- he three-hour saga. And, oddly gh, given his reputation for actorly agance, DiCaprio plays Jack with mesmerizing reserve that it has the of making his former cavalcade of seem just sloppy. He is all grown man.

would agree that he does look old- Winslet says. "But I don't think it's with a change in his face, but with a worldly wisdom he would bly hate to acknowledge he's ac- d."

e change is apparent in real life, too. prio at the Dresden doesn't seem ng like that fellow in those previous iews who might thump the table and to a skyrocketing idiot voice, say 's from *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* Caprio looks sheepish when I bring up. "I think I tried to entertain journalists," he says. "I wanted to them I'm a good guy. *Really.* " He takes a drag from his ciga- and smiles wryly. "Well, that didn't er very well."

ou want to know how fearless nardo DiCaprio is as an actor, go to 1992, when at 17 he was among dful of teenagers chosen to read Robert De Niro for *This Boy's Life.* prio had achieved some success, g a homeless boy in the TV sitcom *ng Pains,* but hadn't really broken lm. Tobey Maguire, who was at the on, remembers thinking Leo had ance of getting the part: "He was karate kicks in the hallway. He serious at all." Maguire adds, says, 'De Niro . . . wasn't he in *Cape Fear*?' I said, 'Are you fucking kidding me, dude?' "

DiCaprio says he did know who De Niro was, but hadn't studied his films. "My ignorance, as Tobey says, was a kind of advantage. Anyway, I stood up in front of De Niro really forcefully and I pointed at his face and screamed one of the lines. Then I sat there and waited for some kind of reaction. I remember De Niro had this smirk on his face, like, obviously [he knew] this kid wanted to come in here and show him that he had guts. Everyone started laughing and I said, 'What? What is it?' And, well, the cool thing is that I obviously showed him something."

According to the well-known story, Leonardo DiCaprio suggested his name to his mother with an in utero kick delivered while his parents were viewing a da Vinci painting in Florence. George and Irmelin, hippies in their day, separated when Leo was one year old, but didn't divorce until a few years ago. Despite his parents' marital troubles and their occasional financial straits, Leo's younger years sound happy. He made his acting debut at 14 in a commercial for Matchbox cars. To keep the young actor away from rough elements in their neighborhood, Irmelin enrolled him in a school in Westwood, about an hour's drive each way.

"I think what I liked best about my childhood was the repetitiveness of the things we did," DiCaprio tells me. "I think when you're a kid, and you do a whole bunch of things, see a thousand different things, it's all a blur and you really don't remember anything. But we did the same things—went to the same museums, took the same pony rides—and those things have become locked in my memory as one good experience." He adds, "My parents are so a part of my life that they're like my legs or something. . . . And it wasn't like they created a false good time—that they went out of their way to show me fabulous things. It was just that they were around and they were great."

I gather from Leo's friends that his parents—Oma too—are quite the characters. George, who will be an associate producer on one of his son's future projects (a drama about the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg spy case), is a kind of folk hero in the comic-book world. "Leo's dad is great," says Dash Mihok. "Eccentric. An artist. He's just a really nice man, very giving, very interesting. Hip. . . . Have you met Leo's mother? Did she offer you a vitamin shake? After *Romeo and Juliet,* I stayed at his house for like a month, and his mom, in the mornings, would go down to the nature food mart, and, like, 'Oooo, Dash, want a vitamin shake?' "

What complicates all this is that, on the one hand, DiCaprio is a regular guy living at home with Mom and, on the other, he is a bona fide star, a sex symbol. At the Dresden, he and I got to talking about his celebrity status vis-à-vis young women

DiCaprio

he meets in bars, and he said one or two things that struck me as fairly outrageous. He said, "Girls don't really hit on me, no. I think if a girl wants to talk to me, she'll talk to somebody around me, but not me directly. I don't know what it is. They never really approach me."

He sounded so pitiful, poor boy, I almost felt sorry for him until—

"That's *ridiculous,*" says Jonah Johnson, disputing everything DiCaprio said about his romantic hard luck.

From what I saw one evening in the bar of the Mondrian hotel in West Hollywood, DiCaprio's friends are all courteous and easygoing. And the directors with whom I spoke had a similar reaction to Leo's posse. "I met them all and I really like them," says Randall Wallace. "And I'll say frankly, too, that if I had thought any of Leo's friends was a bad influence on him, I would have chased those motherfuckers out of there."

But, says Claire Danes, "they have this very sarcastic, dry, ironic sense of humor that they use to test people to see if they're real or not." At first, says the 18-year-old actress, "it was impossible to read them . . . but finally I learned that whatever they were saying was always the opposite of what they meant. That was the rule."

DiCaprio doesn't disagree. "My friends Jonah and Vincent will spend an entire day together and not say one serious thing to each other," he says. "But it makes the times when we actually do say something meaningful and real just 100 times more powerful."

As his big year breaks, DiCaprio is in the enviable position of having it both ways—of being a major star and maintaining the life he loves, a millionaire and champion model hound who says his first priority is to buy homes for his parents. He'll have a cameo as a celebri Woody Allen's new movie, but othe he plans to take some time off, par avoid the impression, as he says, "o ing my face everywhere. Basically I want to trust my instincts with every I choose," he continues. "I want with things that have integrity and feel I'm doing for me." He's sayir the right things.

But you always have to wonder an actor who mimics every reactic expertly, who can spell out "charm" a twist of his eyebrow, who can a fortlessness so smoothly that it s well . . . effortless. There's a rasc Leo, a wise guy who always knows ly the impression he's creating; he's And he knows it. "I spent four m with him and I couldn't figure him says Danes. "I still can't figure out w er he's really transparent or incre complex. I think he's the latter, I don't know." □

Ertegun

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 103 together, Kissinger warned him not to tell any jokes at the high-level dinner they were to attend; Ahmet promptly announced Kissinger's edict to the Chinese officials, who begged him to tell a joke. "It was a lost cause," Kissinger sighs.

Ahmet is also a consummate music man, and his complete command of any idiom has often proved an immeasurable asset in a pinch. When the young Ray Charles needed material, Ahmet wrote a song called "Mess Around." (In a 1953 recording of Ahmet teaching the lyrics to Charles, Ahmet's voice is deliciously dirty; his lyrics begin, "Hold your baby as tight as you can / Spread yourself out like a fan / And mess around . . . Boy, she sure knows how to mess around.")

When Ahmet and his partner Jerry Wexler visited a powerful Memphis disc jockey named Dewey Phillips, the host of a show called *Red Hot and Blue,* Phillips teased them that rival record executive Leonard Chess had beaten them there.

"Did he sing our latest Ray Charles release?" Ahmet inquired, deadpan.

"What for would he do that?" asked Phillips.

"For the same reason that I sing Muddy Waters's 'I'm Your Hoochie Coochie Man,'" Ahmet replied smoothly.

"With that, Ahmet stood at th and sang 'I'm Your Hoochie Coochie

from beginning to end, copying Muddy's best licks," reported Jerry Wexler in his autobiography, *A Life in Rhythm & the Blues,* which was dedicated to Ahmet. "Knocked out by the sight of a Turkish dude blowing the nasty blues, Dewey fell off the chair—and from that moment on, Mr. Red Hot and Blue was our hoss."

Ahmet's artists have always relied on his extraordinary musical knowledge, whether in picking material, mixing a record, or putting together a band. At the mastering session for Phil Collins's first solo album, Ahmet listened to "In the Air Tonight" and told Collins, "You're going to have to put some extra drums on this if it's going to be a single." Reluctantly, Collins agreed. "It was my first big hit," he says. "Ahmet sussed out what would work on radio and what wouldn't."

This familiarity with every aspect of the music business has been honed through decades of hanging out in clubs all night; even when the evening's agenda began with an A-list dinner party, Ahmet was more likely to continue on to CBGB than to go home with Mica, who retires at 11:30.

His ear is unerring. "After I hear something once, I can usually sing it," he says nonchalantly. "When I hear something, I remember it. That's a God-given thing; the rest of it is work and application."

The application paid off in an equally astute sense of commercial potential. "You have to develop a second ear," Ahmet explains. "The first ear is your private taste, which is what moves you perso The second ear is one that, when yo ten to a piece of music and you pers ly think it's terrible but it's a hit com cially—the second ear has to say, 'T great!' The second ear, if it's good, tune with the taste of the public."

Ahmet's second ear is justly celebr "He came down to the studio whe were making our *Agent Provocateur* al and we sat down to listen to 'I Wa Know What Love Is,'" says Mick Jon Foreigner. "I was so nervous. About way through I turned to look at Al and I could see a tear running dow cheek. To bring a tear to Ahmet's e knew that song had the magic."

At the beginning of Bette Midler reer, Ahmet went to hear her sin Downstairs at the Upstairs and wa impressed with the audience's frenzie action that he signed her up the next "It was a convention of hairdresser tells me, chuckling.

Midler was thrilled by Ahmet's kn edge of some of her favorite music. "H a real passion for nightclub music the 30s and 40s, and he loves to sing t songs," says Midler. "He knows the songs, and he knows the really classy so

Ahmet's social circle reflects e scope; there probably isn't anc man in America whose closest fri include Ray Charles, Mick Jagger, H Kissinger, Oscar de la Renta, and D Geffen. "I owe Ahmet a lot," Ge

"He had the most profound effect
in the 70s. He was very generous
ind to me at the beginning of my
, and I am incredibly indebted to
I regard him as one of the great
rs of my life."

ir association began when Geffen
anaging Crosby, Stills & Nash. "In
y he charmed me so much I made a
ith him instead of Columbia," Gef-
calls. "He is a rogue, but he's a guy
ven as he takes advantage of you in
ss, you want to embrace him, be-
he's so extraordinarily lovable. Some-
you even let him get the best of you
e you like him so much."

Ertegun doesn't let business get in
y of friendship. "He's been a real
man, the kind of person who would
ople out of a contract instead of
g it to them," says Jann Wenner.
t prides himself on having encour-
he Rolling Stones to leave Atlantic in
d-1980s because they could get more
on another label, although Prince
t Loewenstein—the Stones' financial
r and a close friend of Ahmet's—still
roves of that decision. "He's stingier
nybody," Loewenstein complains.

recent years, Ahmet has tried to
amends to some of the black R&B
who ended up penniless, victims of
rly days, when artists never saw a
statement and were bought off
Cadillac instead of a lifelong annu-
lantic gave $1.5 million in seed mon-
the Rhythm & Blues Foundation,
was established to help such artists.
t has also privately provided finan-
ssistance to those in need. "There
a lot of exploitative practices in the
ss back then, but you don't hear
the horror stories about Atlantic
ou do about other companies," says
er. "Atlantic was better than average.
reated artists like family."

ny of Ahmet's former artists still act
he's their favorite uncle. Although
Midler left Atlantic three years ago
better deal elsewhere, she says,
e actually become closer friends
then." Ray Charles left the Atlantic
n 1959, but he still counts Ahmet as
f his dearest friends. "Anything he
ask me to do, I would do it," says
s. "I love him to death."

hether with newcomers or intimate
friends, Ahmet's style has never
characterized by the hard sell; in-
he attributes one of his greatest
to exactly the opposite. In 1971,
the Rolling Stones were looking
new label, Mick Jagger kept trying
to get together with Ahmet, who always seemed to be busy.

Finally Ahmet promised to meet Jagger at Whisky à Go Go after having dinner with a powerful radio programmer, Bill Drake. Drake began the evening by announcing, "I like Ahmet because he's the only man who can drink with me!" Then he challenged Ahmet to chug several bourbons. Dinner included some very expensive wines and more bourbon. Ahmet, who was already jet-lagged, downed heroic levels of alcohol over the course of many hours; when Jagger arrived at the club in the wee hours, they drank innumerable toasts. When Jagger broached the subject that was on his mind—that the Stones wanted to sign with Atlantic—Ahmet fell asleep on the table just as the crucial words were uttered. "I just couldn't keep my eyes open," Ahmet says cheerfully. "Mick thought it was very funny. He and Bill Drake had to carry me to the car."

Ahmet has claimed ever since that Jagger chose Atlantic precisely because of his laid-back approach. "He hates any pressure," Ahmet says with a shrug. (All further contract negotiations were conducted by Ahmet and Prince Rupert Loewenstein around the pool at the Beverly Hills Hotel.)

Ahmet can drink anyone under the table, smoke more than one substance, stay out all night, and still make it to a morning meeting, smiling slyly. His debauchery is notorious, much envied, and spawns all kinds of rumors. "He takes some special Chinese herbs so he can drink as much as he wants!" one friend tells me excitedly. (Ahmet admits he tried some samples, but says he doesn't use them anymore.) He insists he isn't an alcoholic and never gets hungover—a miracle of nature, since the last time I spent an evening with him he drank what appeared to be an entire bottle of vodka. "I don't have an addictive personality," he claims.

Advancing age has slowed his notorious pace only a little. "I wouldn't say he's exactly moderate," says Earl McGrath, a onetime Atlantic executive and the former head of Rolling Stones Records. "Now he has 5 vodkas, when in the same period of time he would have had 10. He's got a fantastic constitution. I remember one time it was eight A.M. and we'd slept for one hour; we were in Tokyo and we were rushing to get a plane. I'm ready to throw up, and Ahmet says, 'You know, nobody has energy like we do!' I said, 'Fuck you!' I felt like I'd been dragged through a knothole."

Not that morning is Ahmet's preferred time; for 40 years he has routinely stayed home until noon, showing up at the office in the early afternoon. (To be fair, he does spend an hour working with a physical therapist before returning to bed to take calls.) "One day we were on the phone at about 10:30 A.M.—Ahmet at his house and me at my house," McGrath recalls. "Ahmet says, 'Sometimes I feel guilty about you. You know what David Geffen is doing while we're in bed talking to each other? He's making money!'" They both laughed uproariously.

But nighttime is when Ahmet is in his element. "We'll go to Europe and come back from dinner and he'll say, 'Let's go to some clubs and check out some bands,'" says Val Azzoli, who is 42. "I'll say, 'Ahmet, it's midnight and I have a six A.M. flight!' He'll say, 'Ah, come on, let's go!' So at two o'clock in the morning we'll be sitting in some tapas place in Madrid and I'm having a salad and an Evian and Ahmet's got a glass of red wine and a glass of vodka and a plate of tripe, and he's smoking a cigarette. He can never get enough music. I don't know when he sleeps."

Throughout his career, Ahmet has concerned himself only with those aspects of the business that he enjoys. This has made power sharing easy for his colleagues, particularly a succession of co-chairmen. Atlantic has 400 employees, and offices in New York, Los Angeles, London, and Nashville, but of all of the business that goes on at a record company—from discovering talent and recording the music (which is the province of the A&R, or artist-and-repertory, department) to promotion (whose main function is getting the records on the radio), sales, marketing, and publicity—Ahmet has always chosen to focus on the artists and the music. "You know those people who don't want to delegate authority?" Ahmet asks. "I'm one of those people who loves to give up almost all authority if somebody else is willing to do the work."

His hedonism provides a contrast to the unremitting rigor exemplified by his wife, who is up at 6:45 every morning to work with her trainer. If Ahmet lives like a pasha, Mica's style is considerably more ascetic. She surely wouldn't tolerate the disarray in Ahmet's monochromatic beige office. The company moved from Rockefeller Center to the Equitable building last year, but Ahmet's stuff looks as if it arrived last week. Plaques, awards, and platinum records are still stacked against the walls—although he has decorated his shelves with photographs of Mick Jagger, Jerry Hall, Bette Midler, Cary Grant, and his brother, Nesuhi.

The Erteguns have always been a curious couple. A fixture on the social circuit,

Ertegun

renowned as fabulous hosts, they are so different—at least in the more obvious ways—that the longevity of their union seems remarkable. They were married in 1961; since then Ahmet's extramarital activities have generated as much gossip as his bacchanalian excesses. "We all know how naughty Ahmet can be," says Oscar de la Renta, who adores them both.

Ahmet is discreet but not hypocritical about his transgressions. "Mica is tolerant because she knows I'm not involved with anyone seriously," he says.

"He has been such a rascal for their entire married life, and yet she's so graceful," marvels Bette Midler. "I love her incredible patience. The way she's chosen to live her life is from another world, another time."

Mica Ertegun is a formidable woman—"She's the only person Ahmet is afraid of," de la Renta says—but even her strong will cannot control Ahmet's appetites; despite fierce disapproval, she can't get him to stop smoking. "When he dies, he will have squeezed the tube of life completely dry," says Doug Morris, a former Atlantic co-chairman who is now head of the Universal Music Group. "And they'll have to bury him facedown or he'll dig his way out."

In decades' worth of society-page pictures, Mica Ertegun looks austere and elegant; when she is photographed unsmiling, she can seem forbidding. She has long been a fashion icon, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art possesses a collection of her gowns. Over lunch, however, she turns out to be spirited, funny, and great company. "She is a natural aristocrat," Ahmet has told me. Indeed, Mica is so obviously well bred, her sense of social nuance so exquisitely calibrated, that it is difficult to imagine her as a Canadian chicken farmer.

But that's what she was when she and Ahmet first met, in 1958. Born in Romania to a family of wealthy landowners, Mica had married an older man who was working for the royal household; they were forced to flee Romania in 1947, after the Communist takeover. She and her husband moved to Canada, where they ran a chicken farm for eight years; Mica swears she spent her days collecting, washing, and sorting eggs.

Then Ahmet swept into her life like a hurricane. Mica had traveled to New York to see the Turkish ambassador about trying to get her ailing father out of Romania. One night she went out to dinner with friends who brought Ahmet [illegible] her

of them was exactly single—"I was very happily married," Mica protests, and Ahmet had just separated from his first wife—but from then on, Ahmet pursued Mica relentlessly. (His girlfriend at the time, a leading model, took one look at Mica and gave up: "How do you expect me to compete with *that?*" she said.) Ahmet's more extravagant gestures included hiding a small orchestra in the bathroom of Mica's suite at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Montreal, where it played "Puttin' on the Ritz."

It took Mica a while to disentangle herself from her previous life. "I had a very hard time divorcing, because I was married to a fabulous man, and I was really tortured by the thought that I'm going to have a better life and leave him on the chicken farm," she says ruefully.

But Ahmet was irresistible. "He didn't have much money then, but he had marvelous cars and chauffeurs, and he went out every night. El Morocco was his stomping ground, and Birdland," Mica says. "He was always living well and going to expensive restaurants and flying first-class and running to Fire Island every weekend. He fascinated me. All my friends said, 'Don't marry him; he's a playboy! You're going to be left alone!'" She laughs. "But I never believed he would leave me."

Even then, she knew Ahmet would never behave. Despite his passionate campaign to win her heart, she says wryly, "he was coming back to New York and going out with other people. Even after we were married Ahmet was going out and having little flings. I usually didn't know, but if I found out I raised hell."

Not that that ever changed anything. "He's tough, determined; when he sets his mind to something, you cannot budge it," Mica says. "It drives me absolutely crazy. There is no way I can deter him."

And so the Erteguns developed the marital style that has carried them through nearly four decades: each does what he or she wants, and both have a great deal of tolerance for the other's needs. In the early days of their marriage, Mica took a while to recover from the chicken farm. "I said, I'm never going to work again; I'm going to be a woman of leisure," she recalls. "But I got so bored." So she enrolled at the New York School of Interior Design, enlisted her friend Chessy Rayner to help her with a couple of decorating projects, and soon became a sought-after interior designer in a celebrated partnership called MAC II.

These days Mica's life is a whirlwind of activity; one Friday night when Ahmet and I are chatting in his office, I ask where Mica is. "Oh, she's in Brazil," he says vaguely. "She's doing a house there." what will he be doing over the wee in his wife's absence? "I can't comme that," he says solemnly, suppressing a

Between their respective work s ules and their various residence addition to the Manhattan town l on East 81st Street, the Erteguns tain an apartment in Paris ("across Dior," Mica explains), a country hou Southampton, and a famously sybarit treat in Turkey (built with ancient s from one of the Seven Wonders o World, the Mausoleum at Halicarn which was destroyed by Alexande Great)—Ahmet and Mica are in perp motion, whether separately or tog Both attribute the longevity of their riage to the room they give each "We were not on top of each other," says. "I think people need breathing s We don't suffocate. If I hadn't wor would not be married to Ahmet t When he says 'I'm going to L.A.' or going to Paris,' it gives me two or days when I can do exactly what I We each have our own lives."

But it is a mistake to underestimat depth of their intimacy. "We have n crets from one another," Mica says ly. "Even if it's something he know noys me."

Ahmet is appropriately grateful fo devotion; he describes her as "an a and tells me over and over that he wou be alive today if it weren't for Mica.

Mica says she told Ahmet before were married that she couldn't have dren; in retrospect, both suspect it is b they didn't. "I don't think they would been great children," Mica says. "If have children, you have to be totally mitted. If you're not, the results are trous. I don't think our life would been to be committed. We are comm to each other. But it's the people wh too involved in their own lives, you se results in their children. The richest p have the most horrible children."

She doesn't permit herself any re "I never think about it. The most d thing in the world, if you can't have s thing, is to moan and groan," she briskly. "You have other things."

Indeed they do. One Saturday after I join Ahmet and Mica for lunch ster salad, poached pears, and an exce Pomerol) at their spectacular saff colored house on an inlet of Shinne Bay in Southampton. Designed by and modeled after a Russian dacha (a a Palladian-influenced one), the house

tegun

cavernous spaces built to accommo-
many guests. (When Ahmet saw the
ıal plan, he insisted the living room
ılarged: "Where do you put the or-
ra?") But with just Ahmet and Mica
ng around in them, the enormous
s seem somehow forlorn.

ke the Southampton house, the Erte-
other homes, all exquisitely decorat-
e showcases of beautiful objects and
s of art, from the Miró and the Ken-
Noland in Manhattan to the Hock-
n the Hamptons. (Ahmet's passion
ollecting art is so fervent that he has
aintings in storage, with no place to
hem.) Mica can think of only one
the Erteguns lack: the ultimate status
ol among today's endlessly competi-
noguls. "What we don't have is a pri-
plane," she concedes.

though the Erteguns are rich by most
e's standards, their wealth doesn't
are with that of today's bumper crop
llionaires. (Ahmet says he's worth
r a hundred million.") The reason
is lies in the biggest mistake of Ah-
life, at least by dollars-and-cents cri-
Back in the late 1960s, his partner
Wexler—amazed by Atlantic's suc-
and scared that it could never en-
-began to pressure Ahmet and Ne-
to sell the company. Nesuhi (who
in 1989) was willing; Ahmet didn't
to sell, but eventually ceded to their
s. And so, in 1967, Atlantic was sold
arner Seven Arts for less than $20
n. (It is now owned by Time War-
At the time, that seemed like a lot of
y, even divided three ways. But in
spect, it was a catastrophic decision,
te the extravagant perks that Steve
subsequently lavished on Ahmet to
him from leaving the company.

When you think about what David
n and Richard Branson got for sell-
ractically nothing, and what Ahmet
or selling a huge company, it's a
dy," says Prince Rupert Loewenstein.
company was stuffed with artists and
ty, which neither Geffen's nor Bran-
were. But Ahmet is the least self-
ıg person in the world. He'd be the
erson ever to grumble or whine."

ımet denies having felt any envy at
n becoming a billionaire, and most
ımet's friends say he never bemoans
rematurе sale of Atlantic. But every
in a while he can't resist asking
Azzoli, "What do you think the
any is worth today?" (Azzoli's esti-
is $4 billion, although other in-
dustry analysts peg it at perhaps half that.)

Ahmet has always been too much of a gentleman to blame his former partners for their misjudgment. "I never heard a word from him," says Jerry Wexler. "There were never any recriminations."

Besides, as Ahmet himself points out, he could hardly have lived better. "I'm thankful for what I've got," he says. "I've lived very well all my life, even when I had no money, and there's very little I can't afford. All those people who've made a lot of money don't live any better than I do." He grins. "I don't think they live as well."

Although Ahmet is the ultimate pragmatist, his talent for accommodation sometimes gets him in trouble. Ahmet reveres his father, whom he describes as "a great statesman and a patriot" and who was a key adviser to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish republic. But when filial loyalties moved him to join the Turkish government in funding a chair in Turkish studies at Princeton University and establishing a foundation in his father's name, Ahmet touched off a nasty controversy. The man chosen to fill the chair and head the foundation was Heath Lowry, who was denounced by other scholars as an academically unqualified tool of the Turkish government. Turkey has long sought to suppress information about the Armenian genocide of 1915–17, when the Turks killed more than a million Armenians in what many historians describe as the blueprint for Adolph Hitler's acts. Lowry's critics charge that he has participated in the ongoing cover-up. "Lowry has a track record of denying the Armenian genocide and fabricating denial literature," says Rouben Adalian, director of the Armenian National Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the study of the Armenian genocide.

The Princeton controversy sparked a protest petition signed by a long list of scholars and writers, including Henry Louis Gates Jr., John Updike, Arthur Miller, William Styron, Kurt Vonnegut, Susan Sontag, Harold Pinter, and Alfred Kazin.

Last fall Lowry was replaced as director of the Ertegun Foundation for Turkish Studies, but the subject of Turkish affiliation remains a thorny one for Ahmet, who has also funded an Ertegun chair in his brother's name at Georgetown University. He has been an American citizen for decades, but continues to work on behalf of his native Turkey, which has one of the worst human-rights records in the world. Although the Armenian genocide occurred before Ahmet was born, his father helped the Turkish government suppress information about it; in 1935, Ambassador Ertegun persuaded MGM to abandon a movie about the killings called *The 40 Days at Musa Dagh*. "It's a disgraceful fact of history that a foreign government with a horrible human-rights record could come to the United States and censor a Hollywood film," says Peter Balakian, who teaches a course on the Armenian genocide at Colgate University.

Ahmet concedes that the deaths did take place, but then repeats the standard Turkish line—that these were casualties of war and not part of a planned genocide (although that was very nearly the result). "There are different interpretations of what happened," he says diplomatically.

When the long black limousine pulls up to the designated "stage" door at the Meadowlands, where the Rolling Stones are kicking off their New York–area concert dates on the "Bridges to Babylon" tour, security guards surround the car, then fall back when they see Ahmet Ertegun get out. He nods politely and begins his stiff-legged walk into the arena, tap-tap-tapping with his bamboo cane. As he passes, one staff member after another greets him with delight. Everyone seems to know Ahmet.

Using his cane to push back the black curtains shielding the inner sanctum, Ahmet strolls into a series of makeshift "rooms" that have the intimate, luxuriously tented feel of a sultan's encampment. He embraces Keith Richards, who smiles. Ahmet and Charlie Watts hug, then talk about jazz. When we come to Mick Jagger's room, Mick is lounging next to a humidifier, nursing a sore throat. Although he goes on in little more than an hour, he is gentle and cordial, engaging Ahmet in a desultory chat about football and soccer as if they had all the time in the world. Both attended a dinner at their friend Jean Pigozzi's the night before, and they banter about the gorgeous Latvian girl who unfortunately spoke no language any of the men knew, and about the five young beauties who left with Jagger. "I went home alone," he protests, smiling.

When Ahmet greets Ron Wood, the two reminisce about a night long ago when they went to see Groucho Marx. Groucho spent the entire evening peering at Wood's spiky rooster-tail coiffure and saying, "That's the silliest hair I've ever seen!"

Ron Wood grins at Ahmet. Ahmet grins at Ron Wood. They hug again. From the stadium comes the thunderous sound of the warm-up band getting 75,000 people in the mood to boogie.

"Rock 'n' roll forever," says Ahmet. □

D'Arenberg

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 93 as did Anne Bass and Carolyne Roehm.

Inside the 13th-century cathedral of Bourges, which is considered one of the four most important in France, along with Notre Dame, Chartres, and Reims, the chandeliers were festooned in white Casablanca lilies, and white silk banners with the gold d'Arenberg crest hung from the hundred-foot-high ceiling. "It's fantasy time," muttered Baroness Hélène de Ludinghausen as the bells tolled at high noon and 72 choirboys in white robes made their way down the aisle, which was banked with more lilies. The front pews were reserved for royalty: Prince Laurent of Belgium; Prince Jean of Luxembourg; Princess Isabel of Liechtenstein; Prince Michael of Bourbon-Parma and Princess Maria Pia of Savoy, with her sons, Princes Dmitri, Michael, and Serge of Yugoslavia; and the Rajmata of Jaipur. A few pews back, Jerry Hall, the consort of rock king Mick Jagger, looked as if she might deliver a Dauphin before Communion. Seven horn blowers in green velvet tunics and breeches heralded the arrival of the groom—"the Calling of the Stag," whispered Baroness de Ludinghausen—who walked down the aisle holding his top hat behind his back. The bride's gown, with its 25-foot train embroidered in India, was based on a 17th-century Dutch painting. It was made by Oscar de la Renta for Balmain and was rumored to have cost between $50,000 and $100,000, and to have been the subject of much back-and-forth between the designer and the groom, who wanted a 75-foot train. The bride was followed by eight flower girls and page boys, in white-and-gold satin outfits straight out of Van Dyck. The Mas English, French, and German, was c ated by the Archbishop of Bourges four other prelates.

On the buses which transported g to the d'Arenberg family's Châtea Menetou, liveried waiters served I Pérignon 1985 champagne and tea s wiches, and Beethoven was piped thr the sound system. A replica of the gian royal family's greenhouse had erected behind the château for lun crayfish bisque with truffles, braised with mousse of asparagus, and she parfaits. The wedding cake was red gold, the d'Arenberg-family colors, when the bride and groom cut int a bevy of doves was released from ur neath it. "Magnificent, simply mag cent," sighed São Schlumberger, ab mindedly caressing her black and w pearls. □

Lebowitz

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 95 all when you're a child or you won't have anything to look forward to.

Such as?

I would say, Let's make distinctions. Let's give children something to grow up for. For instance, our parents had adult habits. They smoked cigarettes. They drank martinis. They drank coffee. They ate different food than we did. Children had to have children's food: milk, cookies, apple juice—things like that. Adults had shrimp cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, coffee with lipstick on the cup. Your mother would drink a cup of coffee, there would be lipstick on the cup. That was something: Hey, someday I'm going to grow up . . . What could be more futile than the current goal, which is living forever? Modern parents don't have those bad adult habits, which are now construed to be not merely bad but actually criminal.

When I was a child, I thought only children ate breakfast. Children and men. Even as a child, I knew men were more like children than women were. My father ate breakfast, so I thought men ate breakfast because they had to go to work, they needed a lot of energy. Mothers, all they did was lie around the house, cooking, cleaning, and scrubbing. Mothers didn't eat breakfast, because my particular mother didn't eat bre toast and coffee, and cigarettes. That, to me, was what a woman ate, that real woman's breakfast. Men and children had orange juice, eggs, and cereal. That's a childish meal. But now most adults don't smoke cigarettes, and I see them drinking apple juice. This seems like such a childish food, almost a baby food. I guess they need the sugar to cheer them up because they're so depressed about not smoking.

Who is responsible for the escalation of youth worship in this country?

The worshipers. The un-youth. And what is most bizarre is that there now seems to be a consensus that there is one desirable age to be, or, more accurately, to look, which is around 23. This is the age to which everyone aspires, or actually I should say perspires. This is shocking not only because it is silly but also because where is the constituency for this? Who does this serve? Where is the segment of the population that will be forever 23? Who thought this up? It can't be the people who actually *are* 23, since they don't mind getting older, and by older I—and they—mean 24. It can't be the people who are so young that they can't imagine being that old. So it must be the people who are literally old enough to know better—or worse—because they've already passed that age. This makes no sense. You're never going to be 23 again, so why promote this idea? Why cede power not only willingly but stupidly? Why sabotage yourself?

It's like the newspapers and magazines, which are always running charts showing how much money teenagers have, which is always something lik zillion dollars of what is always ca disposable income. And while it ma fact, be 80 zillion dollars, the reason so disposable is because it is not, in income, at least not theirs. From whe comes this money? From people o than 15. Much older. The money s by teenagers is largely, vastly give them by people much older. Why? did the people actually in power, i.e., people holding the cash, give over power? It's unprecedented. It viol self-interest. Why didn't they instead that power to say, "Some day, you, can look like us, because what co along with that five pounds you can er lose again and that hair that's n coming back is that platinum c card, that money in the bank, that u niable pleasure of having, at long last, the answers."

Wouldn't this be the better path? easier, more sensible way? Because other thing is completely insane. Clea the people who thought this up are p ple who don't have enough to wo about, who don't have enough anxi who don't find real life risky enough. you've solved all your problems by time you're 40. Perhaps some peo have. I don't know them. Say you've least solved your financial problems—t happens. Say you've achieved all y goals, even though most people have Now what can you do? What would really a mountain to climb? Trying look 23. That's an endless job. That's bor-intensive. That costs a fortune. A

p of that, it absolutely cannot be It doesn't work. There's a challenge ou. Better even than the impossible n—the impossible nightmare.

at else besides vanity do you think this obsession with youth?

first of all, the terror of old age o most people like the terror of old nstead of the terror of death. Both s are operative, but when you live in ciety where you don't see death, the actual physical manifestation of is rarely in evidence, it makes it for us to imagine that we are more rned with being older than we are being over.

makes sense to me that people are ed of dying. It makes some sense that people don't want to get old, makes especially good sense in a e in which all advantage has been to youth. And "given" is the key The superior position held by youth matter of perception. So strongly s this perception that nobody both- remark on the fact that it's not Here's what is true. It is true that lie. It is true that if you don't die you get old. And along with age s infirmity, and you fall apart, and ose your looks. These things are But it still isn't true that all advan- is to youth. There are things old e have that young people don't. could be construed as remarkably l. It should be very valuable. It's d that in an era in which there is t no need for physical vigor it is so prized. Almost nothing in this so- has to be done by brute strength, de health, by physical prowess. In people who use their physicality for survival are at the very, very bot- f society. The further you are from your body for your own survival, igher your status, unless, of course, e a professional athlete. Consequent- all live in this dreamworld where thlete acts out this fantasy of what 's face it, virility. That's not a cul- that's a cult.

rd physical labor carries so little stat- d returns so little reward that almost tive of the United States will do it. If ave to earn your living by picking let- chances are you are not even legally country. Who really should be going gym? Who shouldn't be smoking? should be getting eight hours of a steam, a sauna, a massage? The e pickers. Who needs this stuff? ttuce pickers. Who doesn't get it? The e pickers. Who instead is lifting weights, stretching muscles, running laps? If you're sitting in a law firm all day, committing white-collar crime, do you really need to drink seven gallons of water? You walk up Madison Avenue, every third person looks like they're on their way up Mount Everest. They have a knapsack, they have a bottle of water. You never know what's going to happen, because you could get to 63rd Street and suddenly there could be a drought. The entire Upper East Side, instantly, it's going to be a desert, a wasteland. Dust blowing through Mortimer's, tumbleweed rolling down the ramp at the Guggenheim.

You see all these people with big muscles, but they don't touch anything, they don't lift anything. Do you need abs of steel to reach into your pocket to tip the guy who takes your suitcase at the airport? Perfect biceps to hail a cab? It's a complete turning upside down of the way the world always worked. It doesn't make sense. What does make sense is a fat Chinese emperor with long fingernails. You want a role model for wealth and power? A real fat Chinese emperor with six-inch fingernails. That tells you right away. This guy weighs 300 pounds, he's not moving. With those fingernails, he's not picking any lettuce.

We live in a fantasyland where we value youth in a totally abstract way. What has value in this culture? Money. Who doesn't have any money? Youth. Did you ever hear anyone say, "I'm going out with this 19-year-old guy. I don't really like him, but boy is he rich"?

What do you think is the general attitude toward teenagers?

Let me begin by saying that I am no fan of teenagers. A more annoying group I cannot imagine. But they are feared and loathed in this country to the point where there are laws against them that are clearly unconstitutional. And, as a great civil libertarian, I am appalled. A curfew? What is this, Poland, 1970? Of course you can't have a law about what time teenagers can walk on the streets. It's unbelievably outrageous that this is tolerated. The fear of teenagers, however, is understandable; they're big, they know nothing, and they have cars. That's a dangerous combo. I think you should be allowed to drive only between the ages of 30 and 40. Before 30 you're too reckless, and after 40 you can't see.

As far as the loathing of teenagers is concerned, certainly it springs from envy of their sexuality, which is most extreme at this time of life, especially for boys. This is primarily why teenagers are dangerous and the reason they are feared. When people say they're afraid of teenagers, they actually mean they're afraid of teenage boys. I know that there are some gangs of teenage girls, but it's pretty rare. I've known many people who've been mugged; I don't think I know anyone who's been mugged by a girl.

Boys are a major problem because now we no longer have use for them. After all, what are they but highly flammable repositories of testosterone? There is no longer a use for this testosterone. We're not going to have any more real wars, and hard labor and the operation of heavy machinery have been largely replaced by soft labor operating light machinery. All the boy responsibility has been shifted either to machines or to people who are very submerged from a status point of view. There's nothing to do with these boys. We can't think of what to do with them, and they can't think of what to do with themselves. So, basically they rape and pillage, which is what they do when they have nothing to do, and thus we not illogically perceive them as dangerous. The reaction to this has been a war on boys masquerading as a war on crime. Boys cause these problems because they're too primitive for the culture. Testosterone is something we needed to start civilization, but as civilization progressed, we didn't need it anymore.

Here are some things that women would not have invented: the wheel, the gun, the internal-combustion engine, fire. These are male inventions, testosterone-driven inventions. In order to get from caves to co-ops, we needed men, or actually boys, because people died so young. Everyone thinks man invented this, man invented that, but really boy did. Boy invented weapons. Boy invented tools. Boy invented all the things we needed to survive before life was a cabaret. So, boy was really good then. But now our culture has passed him by, and what has he become? What do all things become when we no longer need them but still want them? Ornamental. We like their looks, which is why we idolize the male athlete and the male body, which, as it has become more and more marginal to the culture, has become more and more a cult object. The young boy, like the Virgin Mary, is now an object of adoration, but doesn't perform any real function. And what functions he tries to perform, we try to contain. That's why we have all these jails. These jails are filled with boys. They're not filled with men. The only reason that there are men in jail is that we're

now so scared of boys that when we put them in jail, we put them in jail forever, where they eventually become men. We don't really need to keep most men in jail, because what they do as boys they're not likely to do as men; they don't have the energy.

It's common, and not wrong, to say that the culture abhors women. The culture does abhor women, but it's petrified of boys. So we punish them for their boyness, but dote on their boyishness. We take 20 of them and make them into giant stars, give them $50 million to be basketball players, football players, baseball players. Now they're big heroes. We love them. We put them in underwear ads. We worship them. Up there, high on the billboard in his underwear, he's beautiful, we adore him. But back down here on the street, we're terrified of him.

Do you think there's a connection between health and vanity?

This obsessive concern with personal health *is* vanity. Vanity standing in for religion. If you're jogging, people yell, "Good for you." You're admired. You're doing the right thing, like comforting the afflicted or succoring the poor. This shocks me, because it's a purely selfish act. You're doing it to look better and live longer. It used to be that "good for you" meant "good," not "you." People are always saying, in very approving tones, "He works out, he takes care of himself." Taking care of yourself, is that supposed to be our goal? Isn't that a little rudimentary to be the source of admiration? You take care of yourself so that other people don't have to. You take care of yourself so that if called upon you can take care of other people. You take care of yourself so that you have the strength to accomplish something genuinely worthy of adult attention—a quality not readily attributable to 45 minutes on the StairMaster.

There is the belief that if you run, don't smoke, drink apple juice, not only will you live to be 95 or for eternity—whichever comes first—but that what you will be is not actually 95, preceded by all that actually precedes it, but, in fact, 35 for 60 years. Clearly that's the plan. No one really wants to be 95. No one ever sees anyone who's 95. All the people who are 95, we hide. Except for the rare one they trot out to show you how great it can be to be 95. Take all the people who are 95. How many are you going to find that you really want to be, who can still think, who can still walk, who can still even drink apple juice?

So, people want to be not merely forever, but forever and young. And, little by little, they see that they're not. They lead these lives of self-inflicted deprivation, and then one day they look in the mirror and there, where there used to be a very defined line indicating the chin, there is now what can only be described as a kind of smudge. And they—or let's be honest, you—kind of squint and it, let's be honest, kind of disappears. A perfect example of the intelligence of the human body, because surely it is not just random good fortune that at the very moment you are losing that line at your chin you are also losing your ability to see it.

Now, many people respond to this loss of face by racing to the plastic surgeon. To me, this falls into the category of desperate measures. Desperate measures, as opposed to certain measures. A certain measure is one taken at a certain point; for example, the point at which you recognize that although there *was* indeed an era during which it was possible to stay up for three nights in a row without looking like a particularly ill-used hostage, that era has passed. Certain measures must be taken; you have to go to sleep. A desperate measure is: You pay someone the price of a Jaguar XJ8 to perform major invasive surgery.

I don't care, by the way, if people want to do this. To me, it is not a moral issue. I make moral judgments. This is not one of them. I don't think it's an act of morality or immorality. I just don't think it's warranted. In other words, I don't think that what's happening to your face is that bad. I see what's happening to my face, and the faces of those around me, and, yes, we definitely used to look better, there's no question, and we're going to look worse, unless we die. And we wish we didn't look this way, because it is less good. This I freely admit. However, do we look so much worse that *surgery* is called for? I, for one, do not. Now, on the other hand, I was not the reigning beauty of my day. Plastic surgery, for the average-looking person, is a kind of aesthetic social climbing, a kind of ersatz democracy. Who are the only people who used to have plastic surgery? Rich people and movie stars. Those are the people who should have it. If you were astoundingly beautiful at 25, if you were, say, the young Julie Christie, the normal process of aging is a genuine tragedy not only for you but for all those who looked upon you.

Average-looking people who are perfectly willing—in fact, delighted—to dwell at the very bottom of the moral and lectual heap hold themselves to a dard of beauty that is psychotically I hear people complain about how look, people I've known for 25 yea them I say, "What are you compla about? You never looked that good gin with. You looked better then tha do now because you were young, n cause you were beautiful."

But the truth is that youth isn't thing when it comes to beauty, bec without question, the present-day still looks a million times better tha most every single 20-year-old on the et. What does aging mean to the av person? That you look better at 20 you do at 40. What does aging me the great beauty? What brain da would mean to Stephen Hawking.

Do you still have a desire to be current, to keep up?

"Still" is not the word you're lookin I never particularly had a desire to up, or even, frankly, to sit up. But if you mean is do I know what's the club on Tuesday night, the answer is do not. And don't tell me. I want yo to tell me. It's one of those things I want to know. I don't want to know bone density. I don't want to know called. I don't want to know what' best club on Tuesday night. When I 20 I knew, not because I had a desi be current, but because I *was* cu That's what 20 means.

What not being 20 means is that the time I don't even know who people are. These new movie stars whatnot. The entire point of a movie is glamour, and it's impossible for an younger than you to be glamorous. beautiful, cute, but not glamorous. C orous has to be older, beyond you perience, beyond your years. That's people really mean when they say s one looks like a movie star. Nothi more telling of someone's age than they think is glamorous. So, to Cary Grant looks like a movie star, Newman looks like a movie star, W Beatty looks like a movie star, but Pitt, to be perfectly frank, looks li trick.

We live in a culture that values not only youth but also growth and development, and believes that this growth continues throughout life. Do you think this is true?

No, it is not true. The word "growt most accurately used to describe phy growth. To use it in the way that you

s an abstraction, not to mention a ion. A construct grounded in wishful ing, betraying the basest sort of ng. Physical growth is real. Children out very short and get taller. They lly grow up. Their feet get bigger. arms get longer. Their teeth come New teeth come in. I recently had a pulled, and, believe me, I waited in To replace the one tooth that came had to buy three teeth at the cost emester at Yale. I am now in a posi- where I can no longer afford my eeth. I am living beyond my means y to chew. So much for lifelong h. If it doesn't apply to teeth, it 't apply.

dless growth, like endless youth, is be found in nature. We live in an nthralled by nature, obsessed by it, ipful of it, yet at the same time en- unwilling to accept its reality. If na- s not reality, then what is? Perhaps not really nature that people love. ps it is not really love. Perhaps it is h. A canard. A fairy tale. A lie.

u cannot kill an elephant. An *ele-*. We now value elephants very highly. Because we're not allowed to kill them, we can't use their ivory to make piano keys. We have to keep them, even though, in my opinion, for the elephant it could only be considered a step up to become a piano. You cannot make a piano out of an elephant anymore. To me it is a testament to man's ingenuity and inventiveness that we ever thought to make a piano out of an elephant to begin with. I personally know that if I had looked at an elephant I would not have seen a piano. I am grateful to the person who did. This is what humans are for, to see an elephant and make a piano. We now live in an era where you're not allowed to make a piano out of an elephant. That we ever could, I'm awestruck. That we no longer do, I'm sunk in despair. An elephant should be happy that it can even be a piano. We may not have the perfectibility of man, but we do have the perfectibility of elephant. We can make the elephant into a piano. I personally do not think an elephant would ever have thought to make a piano out of a man.

Do we prohibit the killing of elephants because we love elephants so much? Because we love nature so much? Because we loathe pianos? Or because when it comes to nature we have decided to make certain selections so unnatural that they come close to achieving the condition of art? We love elephants in their natural state, but abhor people in theirs.

People wholly unable to form a single coherent notion seem to have no trouble at all entertaining diametrically opposed points of view. Save the whales, get rid of the gray. Old-growth forests, new-growth hair. Organic tomatoes, silicone breasts.

Perhaps it is not really the elephant's life span that concerns us. Perhaps we have decided that it is easier to deal with the elephant's mortality than it is to deal with our own. It is, after all, easy enough not to kill an elephant. You simply have to not kill an elephant. What could be simpler? What could be more humane? What could be a greater tribute to our empathy, our compassion? All of which we have for elephants, none of which we have for ourselves. Gray, wrinkled, hardly lithe, the elephant is a thing of beauty—the first wife, a thing of the past. □

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arts on Fire

NUED FROM PAGE 84 Hoover's ob- e sensitivity. In recommendations writ- 1960 for the incoming administration, had included the F.B.I. on a list of l agencies in need of integration (there no Negro "agents" beyond five liv- members of Hoover's personal staff, ding his chauffeur and doorman). ecommendation bore the distinction coming the first of King's writings tch the director's eye.

Saturday, December 7, President yndon Johnson held his first news rence and, immediately afterward, re- d phone banter with Senator Russell. destroyed me," Russell complained, ng me on this Warren Commission." ou told me at least a hundred times ou were ruined," scoffed Johnson. o, this is the first time," Russell man- to insist before Johnson extended an tion to "come and sit in the warm " of the White House pool. "I've got ort-winded business—I can't breathe," ll objected, but Johnson sent a presi- l car to pick him up. Once the Geor- nator had arrived, Johnson cut short ntries by giving him notice of his de- hation to pass the civil-rights bill.

"I'm not going to cavil and I'm not going to compromise," he told Russell, almost nose-to-nose. "I'm going to pass it just as it is, Dick, and if you get in my way I'm going to run you down. I just want you to know that, because I care about you."

"Mr. President, you may be right," Russell replied. "But if you do run over me, it will not only cost you the South, it will cost you the election."

Having staked their ground, the men returned to congenial subjects as they paddled naked in the White House pool.

Early on Monday, December 23, as swaths of black crêpe came down from the White House chandeliers, seven top F.B.I. officials gathered in the office of Fred Baumgardner (section chief, Internal Security Division Five) for a conference "aimed at neutralizing Martin Luther King as an effective Negro leader."

Assistant Director William Sullivan ruled out standard F.B.I. techniques, such as dragnet interviews, which could be traced back to the bureau. An emphasis on secrecy limited the men's options to surreptitious information-gathering techniques.

Before the assassination of the president, after a byzantine combination of high politics and near blackmail, J. Edgar Hoover had manipulated Robert Kennedy into officially approving the top-secret wiretapping of Martin Luther King. (A crucial factor in the Hoover victory had been the director's implicit threats to reveal his documentation of John Kennedy's sexual relations with Ellen Rometsch, a possible East German spy.) The wiretaps had been authorized for some of King's phones as of October 10. Unlike other wiretap-monitor lines—which ran from the phone company to the Atlanta F.B.I. offices—King's tap monitors were to be wired into a phony engineering company. This made the taps more difficult to trace to the bureau.

Atlanta's role was to funnel intelligence, grouped under two headings—money and sex—to headquarters. On the first front, the conference resolved to enlist the I.R.S. to investigate King and his financial supporters for tax avoidance or financial misbehavior. As for sex, they would follow up leads that on the road King liked to pursue women. Assistant Director Sullivan closed his report confidently: "We will, at the proper time, when it can be done without embarrassment to the bureau, expose King as an immoral opportunist who is not a sincere person but is exploiting the racial situation for personal gain."

Less than a week later, when King appeared on *Time* magazine's cover as

Hearts on Fire

"Man of the Year," Hoover circulated his reaction: "They had to dig deep in the garbage for this one." A few days later, when a crude threat of multiple assassinations reached F.B.I. headquarters from Florida, the bureau extended notification to all targets mentioned—except King. After Kennedy's assassination, Hoover had declared King unfit to receive warning of death threats.

Knowing nothing of the F.B.I.'s war council, President Johnson left Washington on December 24 for Christmas at his Texas ranch. A small army of federal workers had transformed the 1890 farmhouse and surrounding buildings into a presidential command post, complete with perimeter searchlights and radar saucers for air security.

Johnson himself was a gadget person, but preferred devices offering more immediate utility: high-powered showerheads, special blades to cut thick steaks into the shape of Texas, an amphibious jeep that he loved to drive into his lake by "mistake" (usually when transporting unwitting passengers), and—mounted on his Lincoln convertible—a horn with a sound which stimulated the mating instincts of the nearby cattle.

Never was Johnson's domain more thoroughly overrun. The president postponed Christmas dinner with 20-odd relatives, including Aunt Josefa and Cousin Oriole, to take 50 reporters on a tour. *The New York Times* published on its front page a photograph of the president astride his horse Lady B, and another of him speaking from an outdoor rostrum positioned on a bale of hay. Five Greyhound busloads of supplementary reporters covered West German chancellor Ludwig Erhard's arrival for the first state barbecue, where entertainment was provided by pianist Van Cliburn.

The new president's stress was obvious. Whenever Mrs. Johnson saw her 55-year-old husband—who had suffered a massive heart attack eight years earlier, when he was still smoking three packs a day—eyeing a cigarette, she matched him, reinforcing her threat to take up the habit, too.

Part of Johnson's anxiety was rooted in his need to gain acceptance from Kennedy's eastern inner circle. Speechwriter Theodore Sorensen arrived with tweed sons and a vacant look, having lost not a man he deeply admired but also his from whom he was recently divorced. remained polite as Johnson aggressively attempted to befriend him with compliments, cowboy tales, and attentions boyishly misguided enough to make the household help wince.

Johnson's discomfort carried over to a marathon poverty caucus held in the rustic guesthouse. With presidential aide Bill Moyers and Walter Heller, among others, Sorensen brainstormed Johnson's charge to design dramatic, but practical, legislative help for the poor. The money people argued for something "experimental" (meaning cheap), while the political types supported an effort spread among the competing health, education, and job-training bureaucracies.

Texan Horace Busby, Johnson's special assistant, made the gaffe of asking how all the poor people would get to Washington to seek jobs. He wondered also about where they would all park. "Why did you say that?" the president later scolded, withering Busby with his expression. "Don't you realize these are *Kennedy's people?*"

Hypersensitive and erratic, Johnson soon attempted to make up with Busby, whom University of Texas alums were honoring at an off-campus faculty retreat called the Forty Acres Club. Like the university itself, the gathering place had been locked in an icy, three-year standoff over segregation.

As vice president, Johnson had hosted dinners at the club to encourage professors who opposed segregation, but that was trivial compared with his simple gesture of escorting Gerri Whittington, a Negro woman, to the Busby reception on New Year's Eve. Most attendees pretended not to stare at the White House secretary on the arm of the leader of the Free World.

No one mentioned to Johnson that Whittington had shattered convention as the first Negro ever admitted. Managers at Forty Acres, however, soon began accepting reservations for mixed tables, and, in turn, other university practices began to fall in line.

On the evening of January 6, after a long session with his attorneys, Martin Luther King returned to his room at Washington's Willard Hotel, near the White House, where, with the cooperation of management, F.B.I. soundmen had installed microphone bugs in his room. Monitoring technicians next door fed the audio into a large tape recorder, which before King's arrival had picked up four reels of informal conversation between two women. Upon King's arrival, a party evolved as glasses clinked. Eventually, 11 reels of tape (14 hours) were created. They captured party babble, jokes about Negro preachers and white bosses as well as sounds of sex. According to F.B.I. officials, bureau technicians heard King's distinctive voice ring out above the others, crying "I'm fucking for God" and "I'm not a Negro tonight!"

After perusing an eight-page written synopsis, Hoover exclaimed, "This will destroy the burrhead!" The director had already documented a fair number of extramarital couplings among the powerful citizens of Washington, and usually managed to review these materials in a professional manner. But Hoover was absorbed by the exuberance of King's sexuality. "King is a 'tom cat' with obsessive, degenerate sexual urges," the F.B.I. director scribbled.

F.B.I. officials debated offering a summary of the tapes to the attorney general. But Hoover vetoed the idea. He was fearful that Kennedy would reprimand King, who would then clean up his act. Instead the director used the Willard coup to restore a direct line of communication to the Oval Office. On January 14, the day before King's 35th birthday, Hoover arranged a private look at the Willard transcripts for the president and his chief of staff, Walter Jenkins. Cartha "Deke" DeLoach, Hoover's assistant director, returned to headquarters satisfied.

But the president confounded the bureau's hopes that he would recoil from King. White House aides informed reporters that Johnson had personally requested a visit from the controversial leader on Saturday, January 18. At the meeting, instead of pressuring the civil-rights leader and his colleagues to accept amendments to dilute the pending civil-rights bill, Johnson assured them of his determination to secure its passage "without a word or a comma changed."

That pledge was threatened in Congress on February 8 as Virginia representative Howard Smith announced an amendment that would add the word "sex" to the civil-rights bill. "Pandemonium," wrote one historian, "reigned on the floor," as civil-rights advocates panicked. Some had feared that the segregationist Smith might ambush the bill if it was wrested from the Rules Committee, but no one had predicted his use of women's rights, a cause he apparently considered radical enough to sink the entire package.

Smith read a letter allegedly written by a Nebraska woman tired of the "surplus of spinsters" and wars "which killed off a large number of eligible males." But 11 of the 12 female representatives demanded that the amendment be set

considered, not dismissed as a
o stall civil rights.
nson, holding to his conviction
he civil-rights bill had to survive
letely unscathed, realized that an
led measure could be buried in an
ouse conference committee. But
gationists—and those who couldn't
granting Negroes what they hadn't
led for women—passed the amend-
168 to 133.
the reaction hit, however, Smith's
iscovered that some of its allies—
ries which regimented employment
ch by sex as by race—were not in-
to stand publicly against racial re-
And many congressmen didn't
o offend women, who were now a
al consideration.
February 10, with the gavel banging
edlam taking hold, the full House
by roll call on final passage of H.R.
the omnibus Civil Rights Act of
including titles which outlawed seg-
on in schools, public accommoda-
and federally assisted programs. One
utlawed racial, sexual, and religious
nination in employment. The bill was
ved, 290 to 130. Smith had out-
d himself.

eral months before, in December,
nflicts long suppressed were rising
Augustine, where the parents of the
juveniles incarcerated since July
d to Judge Mathis that their chil-
would stop demonstrating and obey
o'clock curfew until adulthood, the
ions he had stipulated for their
m. Even so, Mathis refused to re-
the youths for Christmas. As the
hit, vigilantes took racism beyond
urts, burning—on the night of Fri-
February 7—the home of a parent
ad volunteered to supervise court-
d school integration. This followed
ebombing of the car belonging to
s Brunson, a deaf-mute.
Valentine's Day, as nightfall dimmed
eets, Robert Hayling stood guard in
rd. Learning at midnight that a gas-
d tire had ignited the car and garage
pastor of First Baptist, a Negro
n, Hayling feared that his dental of-
as next and raced off to protect it.
1:25 A.M., four shotgun blasts tore
s home, shattering windows. Though
Hayling and the children escaped in-
he family dog died in the front hall-
f the house from a .30-caliber bullet.
yling began attempts to contact Mar-
ther King, ultimately meeting with
everend C. T. Vivian, the S.C.L.C.'s
or of affiliates, who offered to help

CIVILITIES



President Lyndon Johnson shakes hands with the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. after giving him a pen used to sign the civil-rights bill at the White House, July 2, 1964.

Hayling appeal to New England seminarians who had become activists. After the March on Washington, the Reverend Virgil Wood, president of the Massachusetts S.C.L.C., had helped recruit 15 Boston clergymen to support Golden Frinks and his Spontaneous Movement Youth Choir in North Carolina. Now, three weeks before Easter, Wood solicited recruits for Hayling. "This is *not* a vacation," stressed a form sent to New England seminaries and college chaplains. "Students should previously secure a source of bail."

Among those approached were three prominent Episcopal bishops. They reneged on their offer to accompany students when they failed to coax an invitation from their evangelical counterparts in Florida. The men's deference to church politics produced grumbling from their wives—who decided to go themselves.

"If you never see me again, look out for your father," instructed Esther Burgess—wife of the first elected Negro bishop in the history of mainstream American churches—as she left her children.

On February 17, Walter Jenkins and his assistant, Bill Moyers, summoned Deke DeLoach. Hoover's assistant director arrived just ahead of a night courier delivering the Justice Department's voluminous King file. Burke Marshall, Jenkins explained, had dispatched the file, warning that the bureau was trying to leak stories about King which Marshall's investigation did not corroborate and which could kill the civil-rights bill in Congress.

Marshall had said that he wanted the White House to understand the depth of F.B.I. antagonism toward King. But Jenkins suspected that Marshall's boss, Robert Kennedy, wanted to establish a record of having warned Johnson "about King's Communistic background." Moyers thought that Kennedy, with an eye to the 1964 election, planned to leak King revelations with the suggestion that Johnson was playing "political footsie" with a Communist sympathizer.

DeLoach pressed the bureau's advantage with Johnson. He said that Kennedy, who had "shielded King for a long time" and who had signed the wiretap orders, was planning a strike against Johnson to protect himself.

Hoover solidified ties to Johnson by cultivating the president's Kennedy fears, indicating to Johnson that the attorney general was plotting against him. Johnson fired two White House aides after F.B.I. reports pegged them as Kennedy's men. After a lunch on March 9, Johnson—who had recently shown less distaste for Hoover's reports on King—invited Hoover and DeLoach for a swim and pushed the director to reveal dangerous Kennedy connections.

Martin Luther King spent the Monday of Hoover's swim in Atlanta, recording an oral history for the Kennedy presidential library. Assured of confidentiality until death, King stated that he had found little difference between John Kennedy and Richard Nixon during the 1960 campaign.

Kennedy, said King, was "so concerned about being president . . . that he would compromise basic principles." King recounted his night ride to prison in Georgia before the 1960 vote, contrasting the candidates' reactions. "I had known Nixon longer," he said. "He had been supposedly close to me, and he would call me frequently . . . seeking my advice. And yet, when this moment came, it was like he had never heard of me, you see."

King was generous in his assessment of Kennedy's call of support to Coretta. "I would like to feel," he began, "I really feel . . . that he made the call because he was concerned. He had come to know me as a person then." Of Kennedy's calculating the call's political impact, he said, "There's nothing wrong with it." Falling into his habit of projecting himself into Kennedy's mind, King didn't discount J.F.K.'s call to Coretta. "He didn't know it was politically sound," King pointed out.

He admitted that the friction between himself and the Kennedys was stronger

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than their shared convictions, but added that he believed events, particularly the Birmingham suffering, had changed the late president. "I really think we saw two Kennedys," King said, stating that the man who had agonized over his "razor-thin edge" in 1960 was transformed into a leader who saw race as a moral issue. "He went through what Lincoln went through," said King.

Hoover's agents surveilled the S.C.L.C. office throughout the day of the interview. Agents spotted a man who had been King's most trusted adviser, alleged Communist Stanley Levison, one of J. Edgar Hoover's chief targets in the King camp, among arriving train passengers in Atlanta and followed him to King. Assorted wiretaps outlined the issues that had made King send for Levison, whom President Kennedy himself had warned King against. They included the S.C.L.C.'s crippling debt. King was toying with the notion of a hunger strike to support the civil-rights bill, but Levison warned that senators would let him starve rather than curtail the filibuster that had developed on the floor.

Earlier, at the Hyatt House in Los Angeles, the F.B.I. had obtained 21 more reels of King off the record. A particularly lewd moment set Hoover's mind spinning, and he quickly shared it with the attorney general, who was treated to a transcript of comments King had made during a rerun of the Kennedy funeral. As Jacqueline Kennedy knelt by the coffin with her children, according to F.B.I. sources, the bitter leader had made a shocking, explicitly sexual comment.

The quote, out of character, apparently reflected King's unreconciled frustration over Birmingham. Attacked by his loyalists and guilt-ridden, the aggrieved man had, in part, blamed the late president. This suggests that his notion of Kennedy's metamorphosis was only part of a complex and evolving assessment of a man whose approval and support had once mattered greatly to him.

Aboard an evening flight from Boston on March 29, wearing crisp church dresses and Easter hats, the bishops' tenacious wives arrived in Jacksonville, Florida, and were joined by Mrs. H. S. Rowe, whose husband was a prominent executive of the John Hancock Insurance Company. They were greeted by Hosea Williams of the S.C.L.C., who reported, on the drive to St. Augustine, that integrated groups had been turned away from most of the white churches that morning. Nearly 70 people had been jailed. But Mary Peabody, the wife of Bishop Malcolm Peabody and the mother of Massachusetts governor Endicott Peabody, thought she could influence authorities. "I do not believe they will deny me the pleasure of lunch with my Negro friend," she said pleasantly.

Hosea Williams felt compelled to enlighten her. "Mrs. Peabody," he said finally, "these folk will deny Jesus." The women remarked that if that were true, there would be little common ground.

At a mass meeting at Zion Baptist, the women took their places among the chaplains of Smith and Amherst, and nearly a hundred students from Harvard, Brown, and other schools. The next morning, the four arrivals went off to see the South for themselves. Downtown near the old Slave Market, Esther Burgess made certain that the fruit cup at McCartney's lunch counter was fresh rather than canned as Mary Peabody—in a red hat crowned with a double tier of sequins—told the waitress, "How nice it is that you serve colored people here."

"We don't," she replied.

"Well, Mrs. Burgess is colored," Peabody observed, and the waitress summoned the manager. Staring at Burgess, whose skin was light, he asked if she considered herself a Negro. The women were evicted when she responded that she did.

Back at their headquarters, Elk's Rest Lodge, Hosea Williams asked for jail volunteers. Mrs. Burgess came forward, and, later, seven companions escorted her to the Monson Motor Lodge. Her party was offered outdoor service. "But that's insulting," protested Mary Peabody.

"You and I will never live to see the day when people will be forced to take others into their hearts," the manager declared.

"Where is your heart?" Peabody inquired before moving on.

The group managed to reach a table in the empty bar of the Ponce de Leon Motor Lodge. When Sheriff L. O. Davis entered with a brace of officers and two German shepherds, Peabody demanded that he read for her the exact language of Florida's "undesirable guest" statute. But she and two of her Boston friends retreated when the sheriff sternly offered the choice between departure and jail.

The other five—Hayling, two chaplains, a Pembroke student, and Esther Burgess—stayed on to face arrest.

The next day, March 31, Peabody tried to attend Communion at Trinity Epis pal. She found the doors locked and S iff Davis standing guard with the F erend Charles Seymour, who explai that the vestry, considering her at dance a demonstration, had called off service. He invited Peabody to hear vestrymen defend their decision. T were backed by their bishop, who contacted her husband, bishop of Massachusetts Diocese, arguing by ph that his wife was endangering the co of the national church.

Meanwhile, Hosea Williams dril more than 150 teenagers who had skip school for a march honoring their frie who had been locked away the entire semester. Williams, who preached non lence ecstatically, placed a collection bu et up front for knives and rulers—anyth that might be construed as a weap Willie Bolden, a former Savannah b hop, advised students to surrender e pens and pencils before marching to Ponce de Leon Hotel.

The hotel dining room emptied u their approach, and the marchers sat w ing—careful not to disturb the linen crystal—until Sheriff Davis and his n surrounded them with cattle-prod " suaders" and 15 dogs. After quiet con tations, it was decided that they could submit to arrest in the dining room w out mussing the place settings. Th pushed back their chairs, stood in unis and filed outside for arrest.

When Peabody returned to Elk's R Yale chaplain William Sloane Co asked for a private talk. He argued t allowing Esther Burgess to be her grou sole arrestee sent the message that groes suffered while whites accepted p ileged escapes.

After checking with her son the gov nor and receiving an encouraging sponse, Peabody agreed to be arrest Hester Campbell, another member of group, was also willing, as was a prof sor from the Harvard Divinity Scho Hayling searched unsuccessfully for groes willing to fill out the party. Bef offering to get himself arrested aga Hayling ventured into the lodge kitch where elderly women were cooking chi en and corn-bread snacks. He beg them not to waste Peabody's gesture.

Georgia Reed, a seamstress cripp by polio, walked laboriously on ca but came forward, inspiring four othe Drivers excitedly sprang up to rush women home to change into their b outfits.

Governor Peabody warned Florida g ernor Farris Bryant of his mother's int

s. Bryant responded that only south-
rs could grasp "the civil-rights thing,"
called St. Augustine leaders to say
arresting Mary Peabody would be
g just what she wanted. He was exas-
ted to learn later that she had been
d almost immediately.

ide St. Johns County jail Georgia
eed and the other volunteer cooks
ad word that the governor's mother
being fingerprinted and booked right
nd them. Nearly 200 demonstrators
l the segregated jail, with 65 Negro
jammed into one large cell for 16,
57 Negro women in a smaller cell
four beds.
ne sight of Peabody, wearing sensi-
hoes and what *The New York Times*
d "a muted pink suit," reduced Kath-
Twine, the N.A.A.C.P. member who
missed the dinner when the vice pres-
had come to town, to awe. "You
just like Miss Eleanor Roosevelt,"
old Peabody.
We are cousins," Peabody replied.
fty reporters clamored outside the
and within two hours of the booking
ugustine was a national story. Walter
kite asked to interview Peabody.
nwhile, CBS pledged that its corre-
dent Roger Mudd would report
ly for the duration of the Senate fili-
er from an outdoor perch on the
tol steps.
OTESTERS FAIL IN ST. AUGUSTINE, de-
d *The New York Times* after the de-
ire of Peabody and the students
ed the Florida uprising of its adrena-
Sheriff L. O. Davis's quest for re-
ion became the town's most visible
paign. Wearing a gun openly, Davis
Negroes that he did not want their
, but amassed a 70 percent victory in
May 5 primary. Deputizing a militia,
s gave the Klan the run of his office.

rly in April, *Time* magazine had por-
rayed L.B.J. as a mad cowboy who
e terrified reporters around his Texas
n at speeds above 80 miles per hour,
ing livestock and bellowing nonstop
s while sloshing Pearl beer from a pa-
cup. Johnson considered the story a
ing departure from earlier, respectful
rage. Journalists, remarking on his
tivity, speculated that the president
paranoid about comparisons with the
smatic Kennedys.
private, Johnson exhibited even
extreme behavior, excoriating Moy-
n front of others, ordering Walter
ins to comb his hair, and telling sec-
ies that their outfits or hairdos were
ugly. He berated Secret Service agent Rufus Youngblood, the hero of Dallas, with threats to fire "the whole damned Secret Service" and puncture the tires of their limousines. "Your damn Secret Service stays right up behind me every trip," he growled at Chief James Rowley. "When I'm driving and I stop, they're liable to hit my bumper and break my neck."

Only with fellow politicians did Johnson maintain an almost even keel. When he informed Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia that his stand against civil rights would ruin the Texan's presidency, Byrd protested. Johnson teased that he didn't expect Byrd's vote, but hoped he would not fight cloture too hard. The president warned that if the filibuster continued he would really need Byrd. "I might make you stay at home and nurse me, and give me a thermometer," said the president.

On April 22, Johnson opened the New York World's Fair despite threats of massive civil-rights protests. Five thousand police officers and Pinkerton guards reinforced his Secret Service detail. In his speech, the president predicted that the next generation would go beyond his vision of a society without bigotry, destitution, or war. "I prophesy peace," he declared. Scarcely pausing, Johnson returned to Washington, met with the presidents of nine railroads, settled a strike dating back to Eisenhower's presidency, and ordered a spontaneous motorcade to announce the news. Later, the exhausted press corps learned that the unstoppable Texan had scheduled a swing through Appalachia to publicize his poverty concerns. Before dawn, his retinue had begun a day tour of coal-mining regions in five states.

In Pennsylvania, Johnson waded through 250,000 people, grasping their hands long after his own fingers had started to bleed. Hours later, in the stillness of the hills near Inez, Kentucky, reporters witnessed Johnson "hunkering down," on the porch of a tar-paper hovel, with an out-of-work miner who spoke softly of raising eight children on a $400 annual income. Helicoptering through West Virginia, Johnson strayed off his itinerary into territory where reporters gagged from the acrid smell of open sewage. When the president unwittingly veered off into the parlor of a backwoods bordello, aides stepped in, but the tale would grow into an uproarious illustration of the presidential sense of direction.

Back in Washington, Johnson often referred to a photograph, which hung over his bed in the White House, of the shack where he had been born. He seemed to draw inspiration from the staggering contrasts of his own experience. In response to the idea of a defining slogan for his presidency, Johnson tried out the phrase "Great Society" to evoke a nation of humane grandeur in which "no child will ever have to say in any territory where that flag flies, 'This is not my day to eat.'"

When an emissary from Robert Kennedy had advised Martin Luther King to distance himself from associates whom J. Edgar Hoover characterized as subversive, King had stressed his "pastoral responsibility," saying he could shun neither friend nor foe. But Stanley Levison, his closest white friend, had submitted voluntarily to his painful banishment. It was a terrible separation, leaving a personal and intellectual vacuum at the very center of King's existence.

King, who rejected Communist doctrine, had never been a party member, but he knew that jettisoning his friend Levison would never satisfy critics who saw racial integration itself as the goal of an alien conspiracy. This had been the lesson of his slight association with Aubrey Williams at a 1957 anniversary of the Highlander Folk School. Governor George Wallace of Alabama and others had displayed a blown-up photograph of this event as the central exhibit of congressional testimony against the civil-rights bill as Communist-inspired, after which highway billboards popped up all over the South in 1964, labeled, KING AT COMMUNIST TRAINING SCHOOL.

"In the picture that they have of me at Highlander," King told an interviewer, "I'm sitting next to Aubrey Williams, whose only crime is that he's a white man from Alabama saying Negroes ought to have a square deal." Williams had been young Lyndon Johnson's boss during the New Deal, back when theologian Reinhold Niebuhr had supported Highlander as a refuge in Tennessee for experiments in racial integration. Since then, both Williams and Highlander had become political casualties of the race issue. As president, Johnson could and did reminisce safely with Williams, calling him "my hero." King could not.

During the same interview, King described the pitfalls of trying to answer emotionally loaded propaganda about Highlander. "I haven't done anything but give a speech there," he said, "but the minute I go to arguing about I wasn't 'trained' there, it looks like I'm trying to say there's something wrong with the school." In the early 1960s the state of Tennessee had revoked Highlander's cor-

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porate charter and confiscated its land. Because of fearful hysteria about integration, said King, Highlander "suffered what many white liberals suffer in the South, the Communist tag."

Never, perhaps, did King feel more vulnerable on this issue than on April 15, 1964, when Joseph Alsop's syndicated column in the *New York Herald Tribune* and *The Washington Post* asserted that Communist agents "are beginning to infiltrate certain sectors of the Negro civil rights movement." Alsop reported that King was "still accepting Communist collaboration and even Communist advice" while ignoring government notifications to sever contacts with leftists.

King took the column as a message directly from Johnson. Shaken, he assumed that the administration was testing a line of retreat from the continuing Senate filibuster, with himself as scapegoat. King was so distressed at the notion that Johnson was turning against the bill, the movement, perhaps even against himself, that he resisted urgent pleas to refute Alsop publicly. He believed that no response would matter much if the president had, indeed, given up or compromised his seemingly genuine intentions.

King sent Walter Fauntroy, a young S.C.L.C. board member, to ask Burke Marshall at Justice about Alsop's attack, and much to the disgust of wiretappers, Marshall implied that the column was unfair and based on an irresponsible F.B.I. leak.

King had no way of knowing the power that Hoover held over Alsop, who, during a 1957 visit to the Soviet Union, had been seduced and photographed by a male K.G.B. agent. The director had retained his confidential files on the incident for seven years, carefully disseminating the photos, for his own purposes, to government officials and Alsop's shocked colleagues in the press.

King eventually embraced the theory that the F.B.I. was behind Alsop, and he pushed his advisers hard to craft a public response that would isolate the F.B.I. as culpable for the smears. On April 23, 1964, some 50 reporters and a few Hoover agents greeted King in San Francisco for a boisterous airport press conference that lived up to the *San Francisco Examiner*'s headline, REV. KING'S ICY FURY.

William Sullivan circulated a scandalized bulletin at headquarters: "King mentioned the Director by name," he reported, "and challenged [that] if he had any real evidence to come forth with it."

Worse, Sullivan noted, King had charged Hoover with increasing resistance to the civil-rights bill and had impugned both Hoover's motives and the bureau's reputation. "It would be encouraging to us," King had declared, "if Mr. Hoover and the F.B.I. would be as diligent in apprehending those responsible for bombing churches and killing little children as they are in seeking out alleged Communist infiltration in the civil-rights movement."

Hoover prudently declined to directly return the frontal assault, which, combined with Johnson's questions about why the bureau had solved none of the bombing cases, left him feeling chastened. Clearly, King had broken through Hoover's wall of intimidation. "I want to hit him hard," King had said. "He made me hot, and I wanted to get him."

By Monday, April 27, Senate debate over the civil-rights bill had become a marathon. The CBS graphics department bestowed a logo on Roger Mudd's five-a-day special reports from the Capitol's steps: a superimposed clock showing the continuous hours, minutes, and seconds of the filibuster, then in its eighth week.

On April 29, Johnson received nearly 200 religious leaders at the White House to discuss the bill.

"Today, as we meet here," he declared after saluting the abolitionist preachers of the previous century, "again the problem of racial wrongs and racial hatreds is the central moral problem of this republic." He challenged the clergy "to reawaken the conscience of your beloved land." This, he said, "is your job as prophets in our time."

Despite his eloquence, Johnson received more attention that week for pulling his twin beagles, Him and Her, by their ears in the Rose Garden. The public uproar lasted beyond May. Stung by protests from kennel clubs and humane societies, the president had explained, "If you ever follow dogs, you like to hear 'em yelp."

On May 1, as the presidential primary season kicked in, Senator Russell told colleagues that he hoped to keep the Senate filibuster going long enough for George Wallace's strictly segregationist presidential campaign to light warning fires for politicians behind northern lines. A few days later, the Alabama governor obtained nearly 30 percent of the vote in Indiana's Democratic primary. A *New York Times* editorial acknowledged that Wallace's earlier strength in Wisconsin, where he had carried 23 percent of the vote in the presidential primary, mi not have been a fluke.

In Washington, on May 13, the ci rights bill surpassed the longevity rec for Senate filibusters on any subject. W President Johnson holding firm, the S ate transacted no other official busin for a 10th consecutive week. Later, sec ty officers cleared a large tourist build from the Senate steps by removing Ro Mudd and his CBS cameras to a more cluded outdoor location.

Bobby Kennedy and colleagues at J tice began a campaign to enlist president in the delicate task of man vering Hoover toward greater protecti for civil-rights workers. The attorney g eral, it was decided, would ask Johns to persuade Hoover that the Klan v analogous to the Communists and quired tactics that had proved so "sp tacularly efficient" against Communists

Kennedy and Johnson met, but F.B.I. continued to steer its own cour Wiretaps alerted the F.B.I. to negotiatio for King to rent a summer beach cotta near St. Augustine, where he addresse mass meeting on the night of May 26. side the packed First Baptist Chur where some children held banners readi LET FREEDOM RING WITH DR. HAYLI King extracted promises of steadfast n violence despite hardships—stonings, rests, attacks by police dogs. "If they *sh* at you," he cried, "will you *still* rema nonviolent?"

Through wiretaps on two close King sociates, Clarence Jones and Bayard R tin, bureau analysts confirmed that Ki was meeting occasionally with a new visory board called his research comm tee, formed largely at the initiative of c porate lawyer Harry Wachtel. Wach and Jones thought King's nonviolent p losophy was growing stale and insipid northern tastes, endangering financ contributions. They wanted somethi dramatic—an advance to follow Birmin ham. King stopped short of engageme but pledged to return south with a non olent army.

King had left his S.C.L.C. colleague t Reverend Andrew Young behind in St. A gustine as his designated spokesman much to the disgust of Hosea Williams who considered Young a well-bred conc iator. On May 27, while addressing a ma meeting at St. Mary's Baptist Church in Augustine, Williams rebelled against lett the Negro townspeople's courage dissipa Outside the church, Andrew Young minded the crowd of King's call for p dence even before the sighting of wh

llums with clubs and a few guns near
ld Slave Market. One adolescent boy
been seen on the doorstep of a store
ly cleaning a shotgun.
s Young attempted to dismiss the
ering, Williams ambushed him.
Here is Reverend Andrew Young,
n from Atlanta!" he shouted to the
d, pointing his finger. "Who is going
ad this march?"
oung drew Williams off to the side of
anctuary. "Hosea, there must be 500
smen down there in that Slave Mar-
he said. "If we go down there, we'll
illed."
want the prettiest girl in this church,"
ams cried out, "to march up front
the Reverend Andrew Young!"

t the King and Cordova Street inter-
section, police chief Virgil Stuart halt-
e long double column of marchers to
unce that "serious trouble" was lurk-
ust around the corner. Stuart firmly
ed retreat, adding that his officers
d not protect the marchers a step far-
"And so tonight we have to decide
her to stand back and give in to
' Young told the marchers, "or wheth-
e really mean the words that we sing,
ore I'd be a slave, I'd be buried in my
e, and go home to my Lord and be
" After attempting to lighten the suf-
ing mood, Young offered a long
er, and one of the marchers found
elf staring at tears streaming down
ng's cheeks.
May we march," Young said simply.
e hundred fifty people crossed King
et and turned toward the old cathe-
almost touching figures obscured
nd trees and lampposts. C. T. Vivian
hed at the first loud tolling of the
ty Episcopal Church bell, striking
'clock, and others behind him and
ng shrank inwardly at intermittent
ds, including the dull clang of a
bar dropped on pavement. The ter-
however, ebbed to jitters of dis-
f, which were gradually overtaken
uphoria when the marchers safely
hed Lincolnville, the Negro neigh-
ood. Some shouted of Daniel's de-
ance from a den of lions.
he march rekindled the spirit of the
y Peabody campaign two months
er. Enthusiasm carried through Thurs-
May 28, when the frail polio cripple
rgia Reed volunteered to renew sit-
at tourist motels, leading 15 local
oes back to jail. At 10 o'clock that
a mass meeting spilled into anoth-
he-mile march downtown. Stimulat-
y the previous night's drama, tele-
vision reporters brought in camera crews, and nearly 250 whites gathered to defend the old Slave Market.

On Cordova Street, finding his marchers' path obstructed by whites, Andrew Young called out loudly for prayer. Spittle, jeers, and rebel yells rained down from the surrounding hecklers, but violence did not erupt until press photographers tried to capture the scene with flashbulbs and television spotlights, and the angry onlookers darted in to smash the equipment. A man with a bicycle chain flayed open the neck of NBC's Irving Gans, sending him to Flagler Hospital. Associated Press photographer James Kerlin was kicked and beaten to the ground. His cameras were lost.

As Harry Boyte snapped photographs of the mêlée while crying out for officers to stop it, a deputy sheriff recognized him as the white man who had been introducing himself as Martin Luther King's newest S.C.L.C. staff member. By his own subsequent testimony in federal court, the deputy charged behind a German shepherd, shouting, "There's that nigger-lover!" Bowled over and entangled in the dog's leash, Boyte spun on the ground as the dog bit his leg and ripped his jacket. Reporters helped Boyte to his feet, but by then the Negroes were in full flight, dodging blows as officers escorted or shooed them toward Lincolnville. A marcher named Clifford Eubanks was clubbed unconscious by an assailant who had emerged from behind a hedge.

Sheriff Davis and Chief Stuart interrupted the soaring hymns of thanksgiving and recovery at St. Paul's African Methodist Episcopal to summon Andrew Young outside. "We are declaring martial law," Stuart announced. After strategy sessions in which Young decided to challenge the edict in court, Harry Boyte picked up his college-age son, who had arrived to see the movement for himself. Boyte's apprehensions grew as a car followed closely behind from the bus station to his parking space at the Holiday Inn. He sent his son scurrying to the room with the key, and ducked on the front seat just before a shotgun blast ripped through the rear window.

The Boytes sought refuge the next morning in the empty beach cottage rented for Dr. King, only to discover that bushwhackers had fired more than a dozen rifle shots through its windows during the night.

Bulletins reached King the next day in San Francisco. That weekend, he called Burke Marshall and White House aide Lee White to seek emergency federal protection. From a Klan rally in St. Augustine, reports already buzzed of roving night patrols vowing to "hang a Negro." An explicit death threat against King was relayed to him Sunday in Los Angeles just as pressures erupted along another border: Coretta King complained bitterly from home about his constant and prolonged abandonments, after which the couple exploded over the phone line in mutual recrimination—each accusing the other of compounding rather than soothing the strains of movement life.

Within days, F.B.I. agents had offered Florida officials a copy of the wiretap recording of that conversation. They were tempted by the chance that King might agree to withdraw from St. Augustine rather than risk publicity about his nasty family quarrel, but gave up the idea of confronting King for fear of an uproar over the wiretaps themselves. Only hours before the rifle ambush against King's beach cottage, the Jacksonville F.B.I. office had asked permission to bug the premises, and anonymous tipsters had publicized its exact location.

President Johnson, in the midst of a political call with Florida's senator George Smathers on June 1, mentioned that he was catching "unshirted hell" on St. Augustine, with demands for federal intervention and "reports that they're shootin' into King's white-man's house down there . . . and trouble like that."

Smathers, with the caveat "I hope I'm still maintaining some of my objectivity," replied that the shooting episodes were "a damn plant," most likely engineered by King's people. After all, the main target had conveniently remained uninjured. "King naturally loves the headlines," Smathers told the president.

On June 5, Robert Kennedy's personal emissary reported from St. Augustine that the city was "too volatile for overt mediation." That night in St. Augustine, Martin Luther King addressed a mass meeting, praising the crowd as the "heroes of St. Augustine" before withdrawing to hear arguments over tactics to sustain the local movement.

With the supply of volunteers depleted by heavy fines and intimidating police blockades, King's colleagues considered an unlikely proposal from the U.S. District Court. In open hearings that week, Judge Bryan Simpson had asked for a courtesy moratorium on sit-ins and lawful outdoor rallies, pending

Hearts on Fire

his decision in lawsuits seeking protection for the demonstrators.

Ordinarily, King's strategists would have rejected such a request, especially from a judge who had consistently ruled against them. But Andrew Young and his lawyers discerned subtle signs of a conversion in progress on the bench. Simpson had ceased the whittling which constantly occupied him on the bench, when Georgia Reed testified in homespun detail about the new "chicken coop" outside the county jail. He remained vigilant as she described how Sheriff Davis jammed fainting male and female prisoners together into the unshaded pen and left them there through the heat of the June days with only a shallow hole in the ground for a common toilet.

In light of this hint of judicial favor, movement leaders decided to accept Simpson's truce request.

On Sunday, June 7, arsonists set fire to King's St. Augustine beach cottage for the second time since the May 28 fusillade. Two days later, Judge Bryan Simpson upheld the movement's right to demonstrate in St. Augustine and condemned some of the customized punishments designed by his county for civil-rights prisoners. These included the chicken coop, concrete sweatboxes, miniature padded cells, as well as the 30-fold bail increase for misdemeanor charges. "More than cruel and unusual punishment is shown," Simpson wrote. "Here is exposed, in its raw ugliness, studied and cynical brutality, deliberately contrived to break men physically and mentally."

Because the judge made his orders effective instantly, Robert Hayling and Hosea Williams considered it a joyous duty to march forth that very night. Their requests were routed to the Atlanta headquarters of the S.C.L.C., which had been embroiled all day in a crisis in Alabama. In Tuscaloosa, home of the state university, police had first tried to block an anti-segregation march by forcing some 500 participants to retreat inside the First African Baptist Church. Later, attempting to force the marchers outside again, the police had hurled tear gas and sprayed fire hoses through the church windows. King had dispatched help, then turned to Florida.

In Atlanta on June 9, S.C.L.C. staff members argued about how King might honor his pledge to return to St. Augustine. That same afternoon, Martin Luther King Sr. heard about two specific threats against his son and was so alarmed that he called Burke Marshall with pleas for protection. Wyatt Walker of the S.C.L.C. called the Jacksonville F.B.I. office, only to be advised that threats against King were not a federal matter and should be referred to Sheriff Davis. Late that Tuesday afternoon, yielding to a chorus of worry that he was rushing into a death trap, King told reporters that he had postponed his flight until morning. With C. T. Vivian, Andrew Young raced off to the airport in his place.

Young's journey coincided with Senator Robert Byrd's last-stand address in Washington on the civil-rights bill. Observers noted that the energetic West Virginian took the Senate floor at 7:38 P.M. for the final scheduled speech before a test vote on shutting off debate.

Determined not to yield the filibuster while breath remained in him, he read into the record the entire text of the Magna Carta, signed in June of 1215, "749 years ago next Monday." From time to time, friendly senators rose for colloquies that allowed Byrd to rest his voice without endangering his parliamentary right to the floor. Senator Russell argued that the civil-rights bill would guarantee the commercial destruction of white people "when it comes to employment, when it comes to promotion, when it comes to being laid off in times of economic distress," by ensuring that "the average garden variety type of American has no chance whatever."

In St. Augustine, within minutes of his arrival at a tumultuous mass meeting, Andrew Young was heading a double-column march of 300 out of St. Mary's Baptist Church downtown to the steps of the old Slave Market. Aggressive but isolated calls of "nigger" helped sustain an eerie tension until one man broke from the wall of hecklers to strike Young across the mouth, knocking him to the pavement.

As the crowd watched Young rise slowly to his feet, the hecklers proceeded to St. George Street, a block away, and then to the corner of Cordova. At both standoffs, the attacker darted in to knock Young down with a blackjack, and at Cordova he stood above him, delivering kicks until Willie Bolden threw himself over Young, cradling his head in his stomach, absorbing blows on his back. Another attacker singled out one of the few whites marching with Young—Boston University chaplain Will England, who had returned two months after accon[ny]ing Mrs. Peabody to jail—and beat [him] to the ground. "The thud of the k[icks] were punctuated with groans from [the] victim," reported an account in the J[ack]sonville newspaper.

Then a slender Negro boy, about [16] years old, broke from the ranks of [the] halted marchers and threw his body [over] the chaplain. The assailant turned [and] slouched away slowly. Policemen did [not] attempt any arrests. Half a dozen o[r] marchers needed hospital treatment [be]fore the columns reached the safety of [St.] Mary's, from which a battered And[rew] Young later emerged.

By the next morning, June 10, as M[ar]tin Luther King left Atlanta for St. [Au]gustine, Senator Byrd was turning to [re]ligious themes after speaking all thro[ugh] the night. "I have attempted to re[ad] some understanding as to the script[ure] basis upon which we are implored to [en]act the proposed legislation," he decla[red] to a Senate gallery brimming with pe[rs]and anticipation. "I find none." The [ex]hausted senator pressed through segre[ga]tionist interpretations of Luke and P[au]pausing only to thank his chief oppon[ent] Minnesota senator Hubert Humphrey, [for] a gift of red roses "from the garden[s] Mrs. Humphrey." After conceding a [su]perficial relevance to civil rights in [the] Good Samaritan parable and Jesus's co[m]mand to love neighbors as oneself, B[yrd] thundered his response: "But the script[ur]al admonition does not say that we m[ay] not *choose* our neighbor!"

With a final flourish from Daniel W[eb]ster's eulogy for George Washingt[on], Byrd yielded the floor after 14 hours a[nd] 13 minutes—the longest speech of [the] longest filibuster in Senate history.

The Senate secretary then called [the] roll on the petition for cloture, and [one] by one, relayed from the hushed chamb[er] through Roger Mudd's live outdoor bro[ad]cast, the suspenseful tally grew. Calif[or]nian Clair Engle, unable to walk or spe[ak] after two surgeries for brain cancer, w[as] wheeled unexpectedly into the Sen[ate] long enough to record an aye vote [by] pointing to his eye.

In Massachusetts, handed a note 10 m[in]utes after the roll call, President Joh[n]son interrupted a commencement addr[ess] to announce simply that "we voted clotu[re] in the Senate today by a vote of 71 to 2[9]. No further explanation was needed [to] elicit a standing ovation in the Holy Cr[oss] college football stadium, led by Govern[or] Endicott Peabody.

Johnson flew home to a rubdown b[efore]

grim war bulletins from Vietnam were
vered. He was huddled over them that
ning when Attorney General Robert
nedy poked his head in the office.
llo, hero," said Johnson.
Wasn't that good?" Kennedy replied,
the president whisked him off to his
ghter Lynda Bird's hamburger party
honor of young U.S. Presidential
olars. Under red-striped tents on the
ite House South Lawn, they joined
ost of attending notables, all of
m (except for J. Edgar Hoover) cele-
ed the day as buoyant supporters of
rights: among them choreographers
rge Balanchine and Martha Graham,
ts Ogden Nash and Gwendolyn
oks, baseball star Stan Musial, the
gston Trio folksingers, conductor
nard Bernstein, actor Sidney Poitier,
writers Philip Roth, Katherine
e Porter, Robert Penn Warren, and
per Lee. Before retiring, Johnson in-
cted his aide Lee White to respond
ire stories about King's plight in St.
ustine.
Open up some communication down
e," he said. "Get Burke Marshall on
et's watch it now."
n Thursday, Johnson congratulated
Russell for gallantry in defeat on
cloture vote. "Bob Byrd just stood to
ast, didn't he?" he said.
Yeah, he sure did," said Russell.
's tough as hell."
He's a good little boy," said Johnson.
t his mass meeting Wednesday night
t. Augustine, Martin Luther King rec-
zed the "magnificent drama taking
e on the stage of American history."
drama would continue, moving from
n to town and state to state like
ges detonated along the circumfer-
of a land of uninterrupted prayers.
ida, lit in part by the torch of Bir-
gham, would help spark Selma. Mis-
ppi would pass along its fiery spirit,
as Montgomery had. Change would
e. In St. Augustine, America's oldest
Andrew Young—still bloody from his
lants—had stood outside St. Mary's
ist Church and promised, "Despite
t happened, we are going to continue
rotest unjust discrimination."
e did not break his word. □

Credits

Fashion

Cover: For **Leonardo DiCaprio's** Prada shirt, call 888-977-1900; Oguri jacket from Oguri, London; Paul Smith pants from Paul Smith, N.Y.C.
Page 62: Bishop Paul Moore styled by Kim Debus for Jam Arts
Page 65: Dolce & Gabbana corset from Saks Fifth Avenue stores nationwide; Vanités bra and tap pants from Barneys New York, Beverly Hills; Polkadots & Moonbeams camisole, hose, and shoes from Polkadots & Moonbeams, L.A. Daniel Caudill for Visages.
Page 66: Top left, grooming by Jo Monger for Pix Producers.
Page 68: Brian Stokes Mitchell's suit, shirt, and tie by Giorgio Armani, from Giorgio Armani, Beverly Hills.
Page 71: For Leonardo DiCaprio's Prada sweater, call 888-977-1900.
Page 73: Dolce & Gabbana robe from Dolce & Gabbana, N.Y.C.
Pages 74–75: For Prada shirt, call 888-977-1900; Bountiful daybed from Bountiful, Venice, Calif.
Pages 106–11: Wardrobe by Ann Roth, Jim Cullen, Cheryl Beasley Blackwell, and Tim Wegman.
Page 129: Leonardo DiCaprio's Calvin Klein Underwear T-shirt from Macy's stores nationwide.

Beauty and Grooming

Cover: Leonardo DiCaprio groomed with products from Clinique Skin Supplies for Men; Eric Barnard for Cloutier/Trish McEvoy.
Page 62: Bishop Paul Moore's grooming by Jo Monger for Pix Producers.
Page 65: Jamal Hammadi for Smashbox Beauty; Bethany Karlyn for Heller
Page 68: Brian Stokes Mitchell's grooming by Gucci Westman for Visages.
Pages 71–75: See credits for cover.
Pages 106–11: Hair by Anthony Wilson, Jason Sica, Sue Kalinowski, Lynne Eagan, and Roy Helland; makeup by Mindy Hall, Michelle Buhler, and Roy Helland.

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Vanity Fair Nº 449 (ISSN 0733-8899). The magazine is published monthly by The Condé Nast Publications Inc., Condé Nast Building, 350 Madison Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10017.
teven T. Florio, President and Chief Executive Officer; David B. Chemidlin, Treasurer; Jill Henderson, Secretary. Periodicals postage paid at N.Y., N.Y. 10001, and at additional mailing offices.
Authorized as International Publications Mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash. Sales Agreement No. 33332. Subscriptions: In the
ted States and its possessions, $18 for one year, $34 for two years. In Canada, $32 for one year, including GST and HST where applicable. Registration No. 123242885. Elsewhere, $37, payable in
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Planetarium

Michael Lutin tells Capricorns to consider a breather from the old routine

CAPRICORN DEC. 22–JAN. 19

Many Capricorns who were at one time models of decorum and efficiency are now for some mysterious reason coming to grips with the fact that they can't go on merely functioning and feigning sanity one minute longer. And the mysterious reason? A 12th-house Pluto coinciding with a 4th-house Saturn. Besides abandonment issues, which have risen to pretty ridiculous levels, there seems to be a need, almost an obsession, to flee the pollution of society and seek salvation in intimacy or even isolation. And maybe that's not so crazy.

AQUARIUS JAN. 20–FEB. 18

Whoever your new best friends might be—and now that you're branching out in all sorts of strange directions the oddballs will be coming out of the woodwork—it's unlikely that they have any idea of the inner turmoil you've been steeped in. As a result they probably see you as that happy-go-lucky kook next door. How could they suspect that the ruler of your 12th house is in your 3rd, or that there are a few key people left over from the old days to whom you have *not* been saying any of the things you know you should be saying? Naughty.

PISCES FEB. 19–MARCH 20

What a bother this world can be. Just when you think you've found your private spot deep in the heart of the forest, far from everyone and everything, and are set up in just the right position to contemplate the true meaning of nonexistence, a plane flies overhead and drops leaflets reminding you whom to vote for in order to avoid an increase in taxes. This is a metaphor to describe your life now as planets transit your 2nd, 10th, and 12th houses. Pay attention. You do want to be able to afford that trip into the forest, don't you?

ARIES MARCH 21–APRIL 19

Exploring the magic of Tibetan wisdom could certainly be a marvelous path to your liberation and enlightenment now, when Pluto is in your 9th house. If you're not up for quite that lofty an experience, just getting into an airplane and going to a new place could do wonders. If, however, there is a speck of sand in your sandal which might hinder your journey, it's because, while all this mental-elevation stuff is going on, Saturn remains in Aries. The result: in the Hamptons or the Himalayas, there is no getting away from yourself. Sorry.

TAURUS APRIL 20–MAY 20

Tauruses could go either way now. On the one hand, you've got the obsessive glutton types—who honestly believe they will be able to squeeze their velvet couch, hot tub, and entire wine cellar through the eye of that needle mentioned in the Bible. Thank Heaven for the evolved Tauruses, who because of their growing awareness understand that, with planets in their 8th and 12th houses, this trip must be taken completely from within and that a voyage toward greater freedom has very little to do with first-class seats or frequent-flier miles.

GEMINI MAY 21–JUNE 21

Can you continue forever juggling people without getting caught? Why don't you admit that your precious freedom doesn't mean nearly as much to you as it once did? With Pluto in your 7th house, all you need to feel secure is someone who, instead of beating you up, will look after you—even hose you down every once in a while when you start to go off your rocker. The presence of Saturn in your 11th house, though, indicates that you are still going through the last stages of resisting intimacy. So grow up already.

CANCER JUNE 22–JULY 22

Don't you love it when your friends tell you not to give a darn abo what anybody thinks, but to do what you have to do because it's th right thing and it's the way you feel? Usually, those well-meaning a visers are the same people who will vote you out of office the minu you actually go ahead and do what you know you have to do becau it *is* the right thing. If only the ruler of your 7th house weren't goir direct in your 10th now, you could march straight ahead with the ligl of truth reflected in your eyes and your integrity *and* position intac

LEO JULY 23–AUG. 22

Forgetting for a moment the deep family wound that will simply hav to heal in its own time, you are now stepping into a new role in whic you will be much more visible and talked-about than you have beer The difference is that, with Pluto solidly entrenched in your 5th hous and the ruler of your 6th going forward in your 9th, there must b wisdom and consciousness behind everything you do and say. Neve again should you allow yourself to be portrayed as a cartoon or a exhausted caricature of yourself. Bravo.

VIRGO AUG. 23–SEPT. 22

Recent holiday dynamics will probably have you stewing for the res of the winter over what Auntie Jo said that Cousin Lily told Granc ma Faye about Tom's being in jail. With Mercury retrograde, the rule of your 5th house in your 8th, and Pluto in your 4th, it's hard to know whether you should allow yourself to be drawn into the fray again an do family therapy for the millionth time, or go your own way and dea with other pressing issues, such as joint finances and your sex life. Re member *that* old thing?

LIBRA SEPT. 23–OCT. 23

As lifestyles diverge, ideologies develop, philosophies grow, and preju dices deepen, the gulf between you and your siblings and associate could widen past the point where bridges can be built. This may wel be the result of Pluto's passage through your 3rd house. As Saturn goes direct in your 7th now, the new year is your chance to heal an splits that have occurred. All your major relationships are in jeopardy and it will be only through your sensitive efforts that they can b saved. That thought probably makes you more furious than ever.

SCORPIO OCT. 24–NOV. 21

No matter how crazy you get over money—screaming about the poo house—you insist on continuing to spend it as if you could just ru down to the basement and print out more. In the end, material gai is not what you are about anyway. Never have been. Never will be Even if you sell used cars for a living, whatever work you do must b done artfully. As Saturn goes forward in your 6th house now, mak like a Virgo: Be healthy. Be thorough. Be simple. Be dedicated. B humble. And don't grind your teeth over it.

SAGITTARIUS NOV. 22–DEC. 21

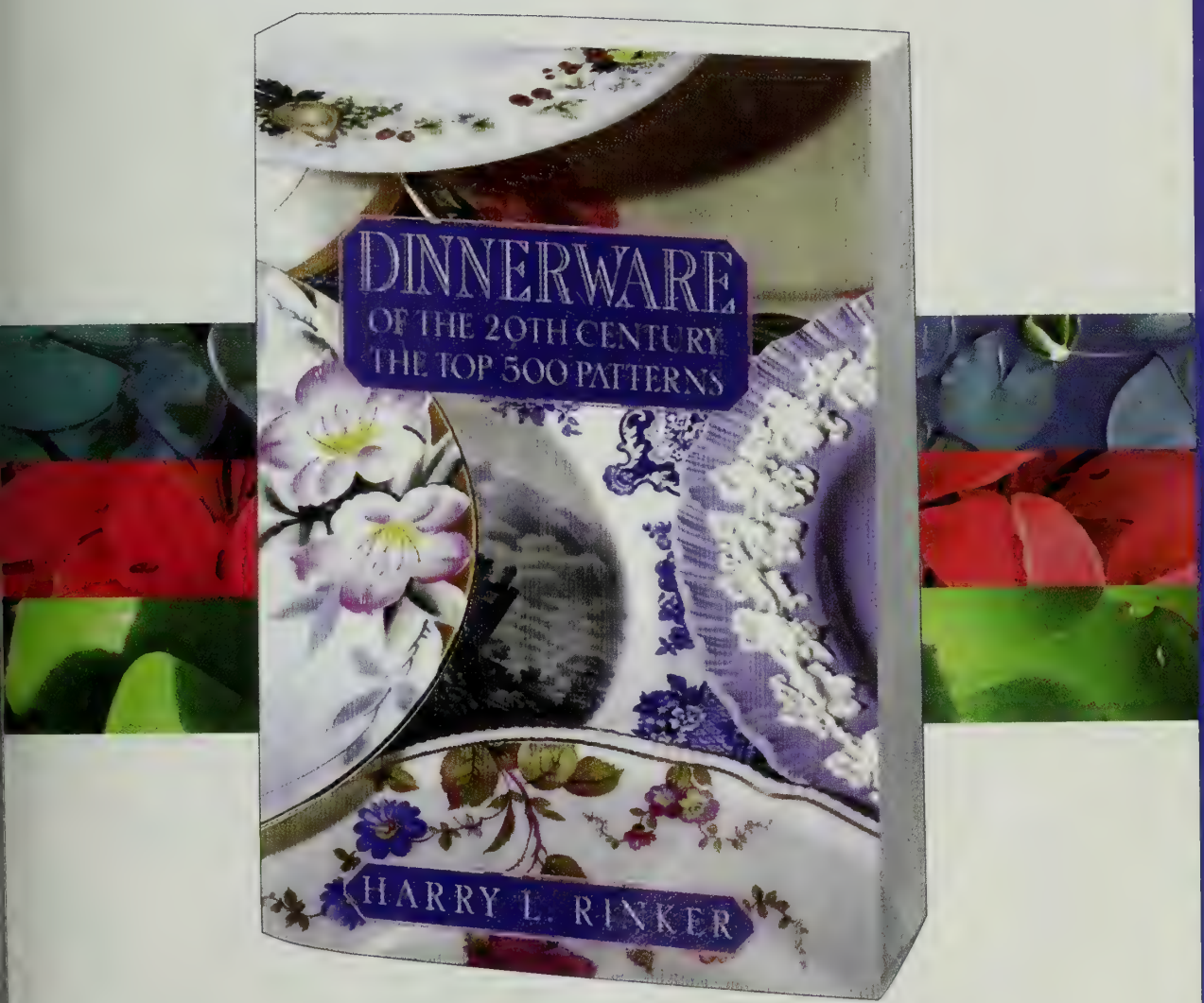
Considering the fact that the transit of Pluto in your sign is providing you with a positively psychedelic opportunity to discover yourself a last and investigate just exactly where you fit into this great big uni verse of ours—not to mention the new heights of self-absorption which you seem to be seeking to attain—it's a wonder that you can take a moment out from all the mind-expanding life changes to participate as fully as you are doing in a test of your capacity to love deeply. It proves that there's always time for a little fun and lots of aggravation.

To hear Michael Lutin read your weekly horoscope, call 1-900-28V-FAIR on a Touch-Tone phone.
Cost: $1.95 per minute. If you are under 18, you need parental permission.

Behind

the world's most beautiful things...

there's usually a pattern.



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James L. Brooks

From *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* to *Terms of Endearment* to *The Simpsons*, writer-director James L. Brooks has been behind some of the most memorable TV and film moments of the last three decades. This month, Brooks releases a stunning new comedy, *As Good as It Gets*, starring Jack Nicholson, and pauses here to reflect on what he calls a quasi-rounded life

What is your idea of perfect happiness?
Well, I can at least tell you what some of the ingredients might be: being extremely mature or immature, intimacy, ease, work completed, family flourishing, some contact with nature, some solitude, some sense of being vapid.

What is your greatest fear?
That my perception of myself is correct.

Which living person do you most admire?
There are now more whom I admire more than ever before—anyone I know who has put a priority on quality of life and pulled it off. This usually means people who have moved from Los Angeles or found a pill that works for them.

Who are your heroes in real life?
Ron Howard—not only for his work. See previous answer.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
President Clinton.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
My compulsion to do whatever a magazine asks of me.

What is the trait you most deplore in others?
Failing to ever see themselves as ridiculous.

What is your greatest extravagance?
Sports betting.

On what occasion do you lie?
When I feel cornered and the truth would hurt someone else or myself to a degree which could be permanently crippling. In other words, about five times a week.

What do you dislike most about your appearance?
Oh, please.

Which living person do you most despise?
No person—but I do believe private gossip and public trashing are becoming lethal. I also tend to be wildly against anyone who frustrates my ability to get my work done.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?
"Oh, man."

What or who is the greatest love of your life?
I love my family, and in a more complicated way, I love to write and then direct. I also love doing absolutely nothing. I love newspapers, books, pro football, pro basketball, wine, and friendship. Quasi-rounded is the impression I'm going for here.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
I'd lose the ability to see things from both sides.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
The percentage of my working life that I've been able to work on something I believe in.

What is the quality you most like in a man?
Self-loathing.

What is the quality you most like in a woman?
Genuine warmth, but genuine, you know?

What do you most value in your friends?
Irreverence and reverence.

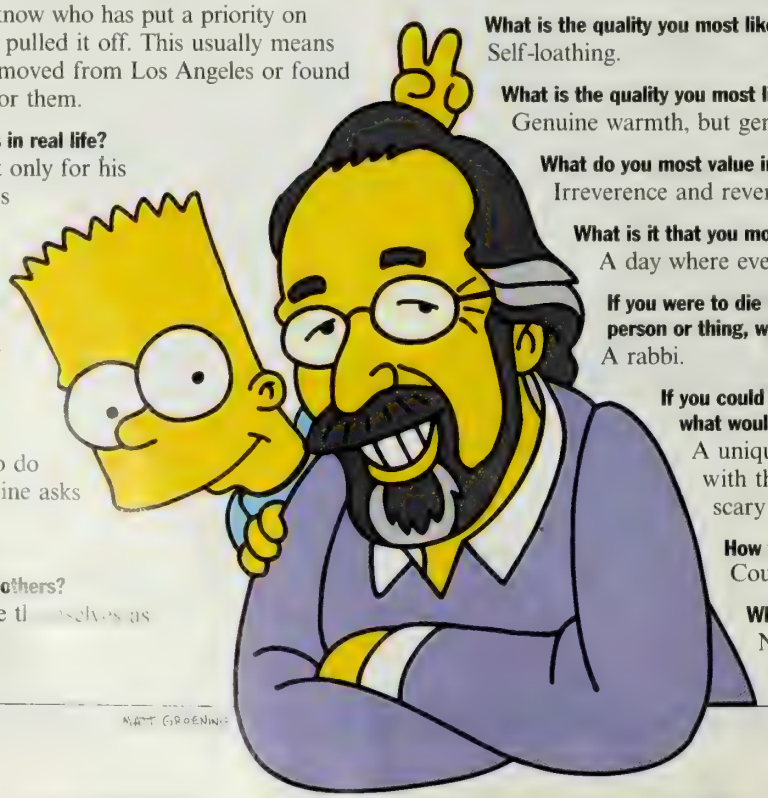
What is it that you most dislike?
A day where every moment is scheduled.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?
A rabbi.

If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?
A uniquely adorable puppy with thick, wildly pettable fur, a scary bark, and sharp teeth.

How would you like to die?
Courtside at an N.B.A. game.

What is your motto?
Never attend sporting events.



MATT GROENING

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GREAT DANES | 106

At 18, Claire Danes has her own architect, dates rocker Ben Lee, and commands $3 million per picture. Riding Disneyland's Splash Mountain roller coaster with the busy star of *U-Turn, The Rainmaker, Les Misérables,* and *Polish Wedding,* Kevin Sessums gets to the root of an astoundingly mature talent and a so-called life few teenagers could fathom. Photographs by Annie Leibovitz.

DISNEY'S NEW STAR | 114

Annie Leibovitz and Mimi Kramer spotlight *The Lion King* director Julie Taymor, the eclectic genius behind Disney's surprisingly unsugary Broadway hit.

THE CHOSEN ONE | 116

Albert Gore Jr. perfected the role of dutiful heir, first inside his family and then inside the White House. Those fund-raising calls? It was what he was *supposed* to do. But beneath the careful exterior, Marjorie Williams reports, the vice president has the oddest relationship with politics of any man in Washington. Portraits by Annie Leibovitz.

BOYS' TOWN | 124

At their quadrennial jamboree, David Kamp finds the Boy Scouts of America still going four million strong, while Bruce Weber captures the fresh faces of old-fashioned patriotism.

JAZZ AGE GREATS | 132

"Celebrity Caricature in America," a new show at Washington's National Portrait Gallery, sparks James Wolcott's bow to the 1930s artists who lightened a dark decade.

SOUL OF A NEW MACHINE | 136

As the Metropolitan Museum showcases the early photographs of Paul Strand, Ingrid Sischy spotlights an artist who saw the passion and possibility in a fledgling technology.

LIGHT FANTASTIC | 138

From the Odeon to Pravda to Balthazar, Keith McNally's restaurants have provided a movable feast of New York chic. But, as Matt Tyrnauer discovers, McNally's private labor of love for the past 20 years has been his 1,100-square-foot SoHo hideaway. Photographs by James Mortimer.

MORRISON'S TRUE WEST | 144

Timothy Greenfield-Sanders and Christopher Hitchens spotlight Nobel laureate Toni Morrison, whose new novel, *Paradise,* recalls an Oklahoma the musical forgot.

FACES OF THE JAZZ AGE | 132

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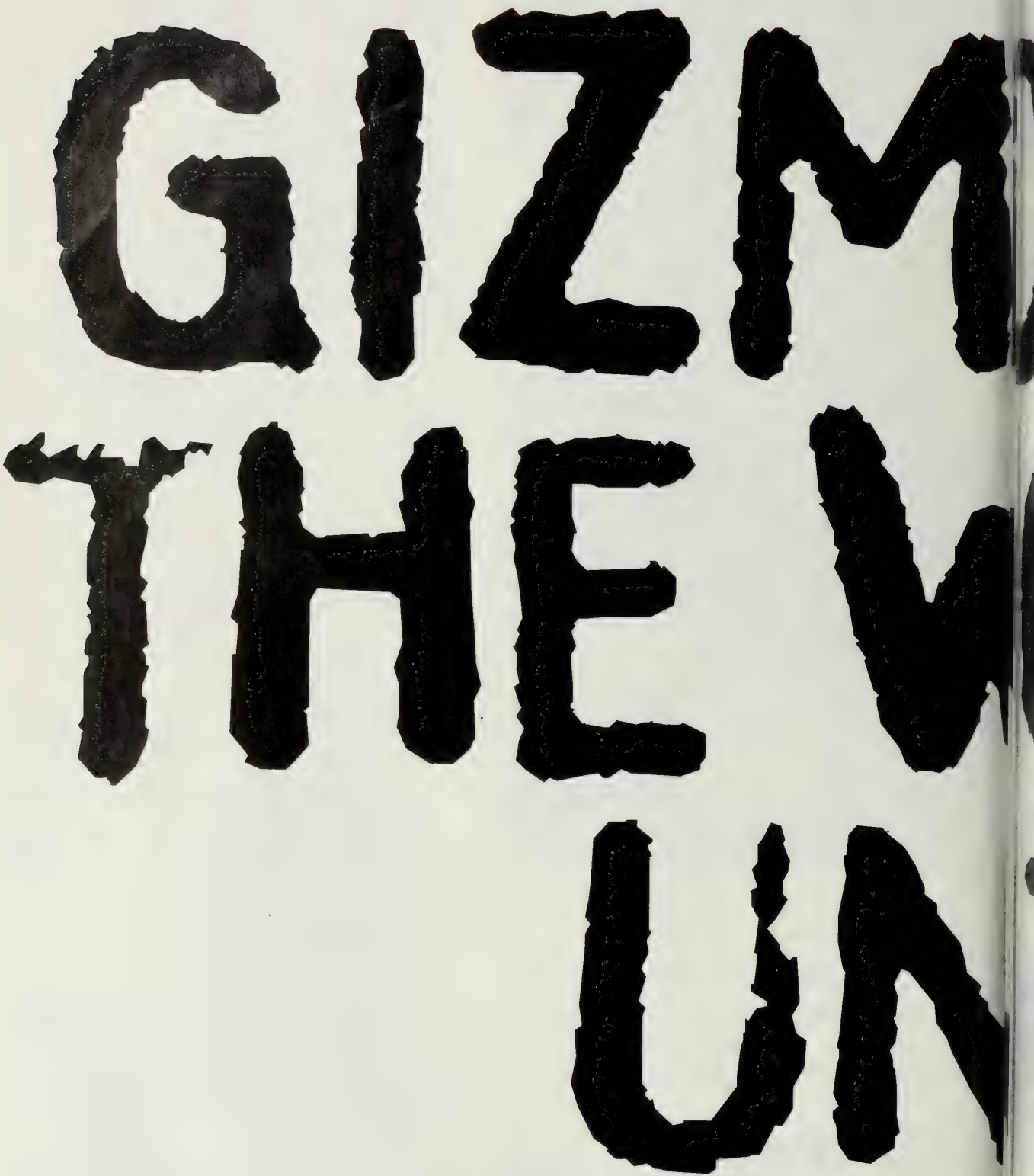


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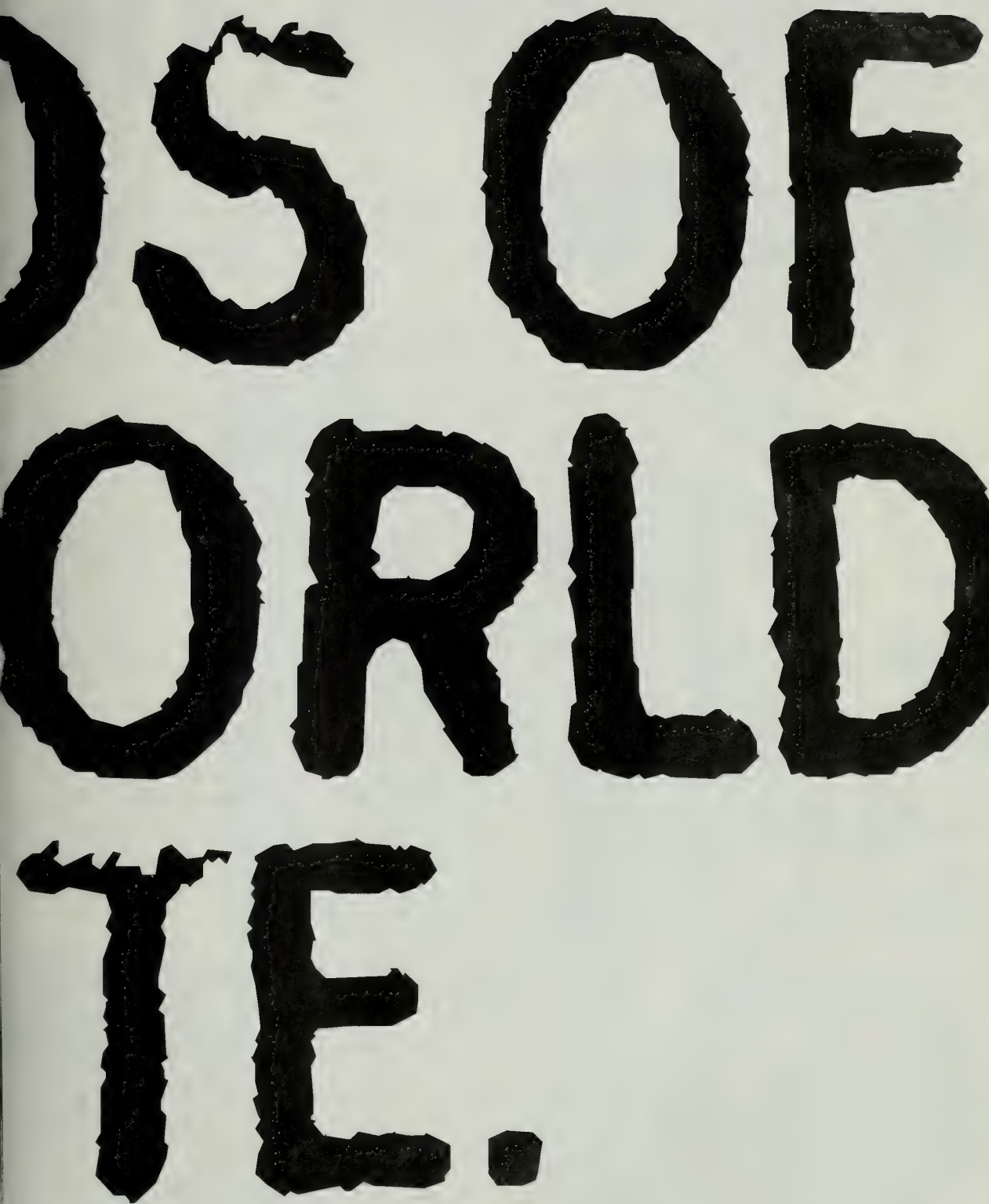
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THE OUTLAW CHAMP | 146

With his killer left hook and trademark scowl, heavyweight champion "Sonny" Liston was a fighting legend. Revisiting the Chicago underworld of the 50s and 60s, Nick Tosches reveals the dark force behind Liston's rise, his losses to Cassius Clay, and his mysterious death

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PAPER MONSTER | 46

Plowing through the full-color heft of the expanded *New York Times* James Wolcott argues that, pound for pound, most of the new sections may not be worth the weight. Photograph by Josef Astor.

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Buzz Bissinger nominates Philadelphia mayor Edward G. Rendell, for restoring instinct to politics and hope to a dying town. Portrait by Jonathan Becker.

SCHOOL FOR GLAMOUR | 56

Once deemed the "backdoor Ivy," Brown University has become a mecca for celebrity offspring, plucking its students from the elites of Hollywood, Park Avenue, and Europe. On the Providence campus, Jennet Conant learns why Brown is golden.

MOUNT SINAI'S DEADLY TREASURE | 74

In an excerpt from his new book, *The Gold of Exodus,* Howard Blum follows the hunt of two American explorers for the real Mount Sinai, which some scholars believe has been misidentified for generations. Inviting controversy, Blum's explorers say the actual sacred mountain stands in the midst of a Saudi Arabian military installation.

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Irish-wise playwright Martin McDonagh's American debut; George Wayne rummages with Anna Piaggi; desperate Oscar campaigns.

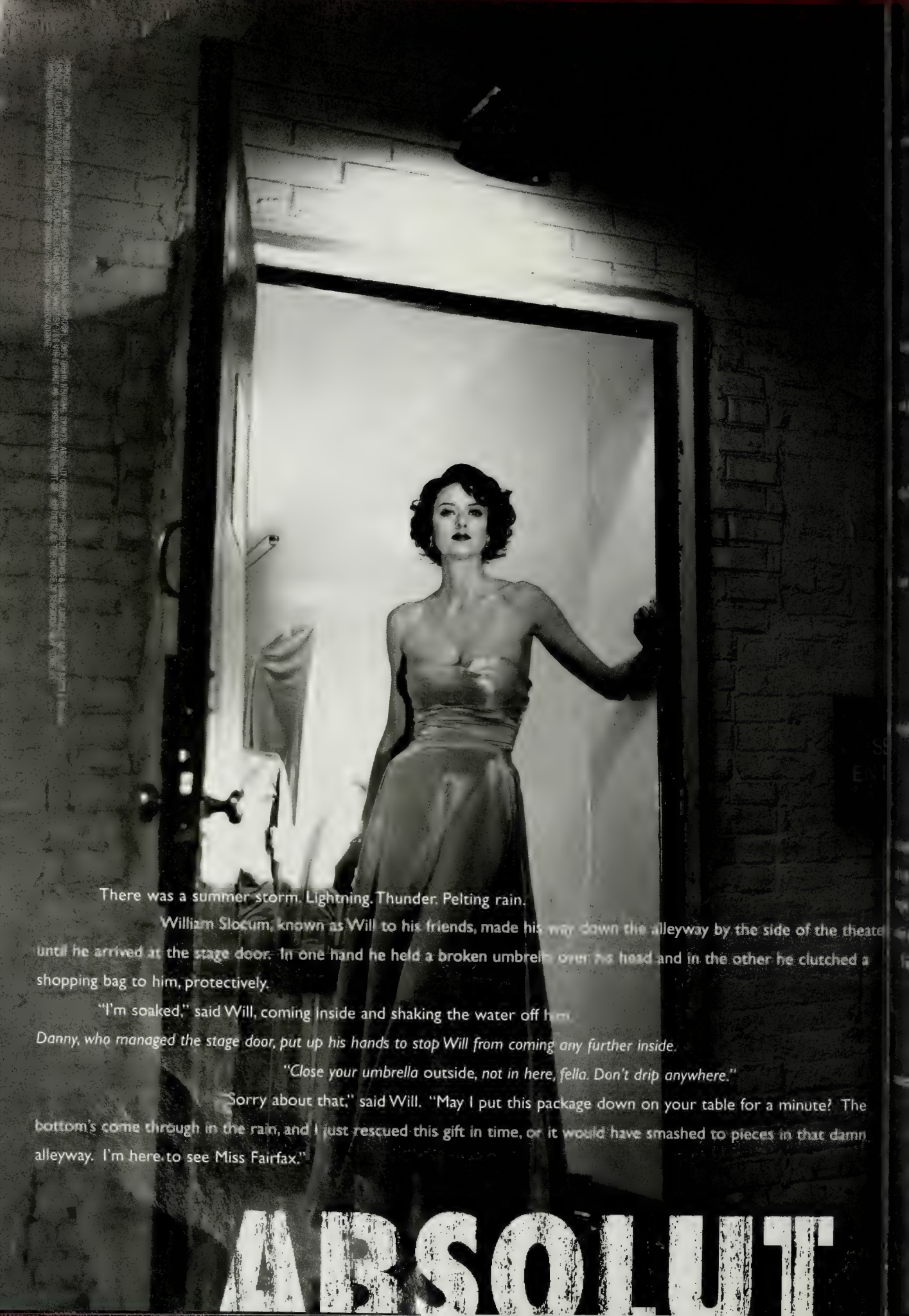
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There was a summer storm. Lightning. Thunder. Pelting rain.

William Slocum, known as Will to his friends, made his way down the alleyway by the side of the theatre until he arrived at the stage door. In one hand he held a broken umbrella over his head and in the other he clutched a shopping bag to him, protectively.

"I'm soaked," said Will, coming inside and shaking the water off him.

Danny, who managed the stage door, put up his hands to stop Will from coming any further inside.

"Close your umbrella outside, not in here, fella. Don't drip anywhere."

"Sorry about that," said Will. "May I put this package down on your table for a minute? The bottom's come through in the rain, and I just rescued this gift in time, or it would have smashed to pieces in that damn alleyway. I'm here to see Miss Fairfax."

ABSOLUT

"Is she expecting you?" Danny picked up his list and perused it. "Miss Fairfax didn't tell she was expecting any visitors."

"She's not expecting me. It's a surprise," said Will.

"Does she know you?"

"Oh, yes. We used to be married."

"Name?"

"William Slocum, but it will spoil the surprise."

"Okay, okay," said Danny, having sized him up: Good suit. Good shirt. Good shoes. o on up. Dressing room #8 on the second floor. Here, don't forget your package."

Sophie Fairfax was sitting at her dressing table, applying cold cream over her theatrical makeup, when there was a ck at her door. "You can't come in yet, whoever it is," she called out. Then she added, "Who is it?"

"Me," said Will, opening the door.

"Oh, for God's sake, Will, what the hell are you doing here?" she asked. "How did you by Danny at the stage door? He's supposed to keep people like you out."

"I told him we used to be married," said Will.

"You're the only 42-year-old man I know who still acts like an undergraduate prankster. I told you when I left you that the was getting tired," said Sophie, rubbing her face with Kleenex. "Did you see the play?"

"Yes."

"No compliments?"

"You were wonderful."

"I'm not supposed to have to beg for that. That should have been your entrance line. What's that raggled package you're clasping to your bosom?"

"You may not believe this, Sophie, but I miss you," said Will.

"Enough, enough," replied Sophie.

"You may not believe this either, but when I left my apartment, this bottle of Absolut beautifully wrapped in silver paper with dark blue ribbons, in honor of your birthday, but I was jostled in the subway, l it dropped on the floor and got kicked, which is why the paper's torn. There was a card, such a funny card, saying rgive me" — perfect for the occasion — but it seems to have gotten lost, and then the shopping bag got wet and the tom came out and it almost dropped again in the alley, and, anyway, Happy Birthday."

"I remember a time when your presents came in little velvet boxes," said Sophie, starting to apply her street makeup.

"When you moved out, you threw a velvet box at me, and I got a black eye," said Will.

"You did not get a black eye," replied Sophie.

"Almost." He placed the bottle on her dressing table. "This seemed more appropriate under the umstances. I didn't want to be showy."

"I'm mad about the bottle," said Sophie. "Perfect for forsythia."

"How about a nip on a rainy night off Broadway?"

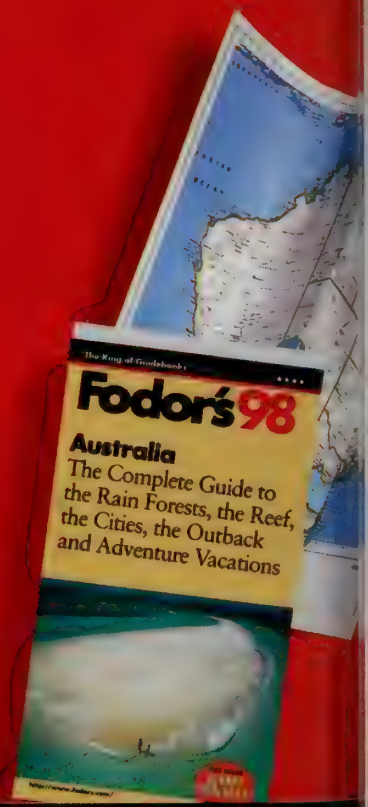
"Oh, why not? Are you planning on taking me out to supper?"

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page 296, *Fodor's Gold Guide Australia '98*

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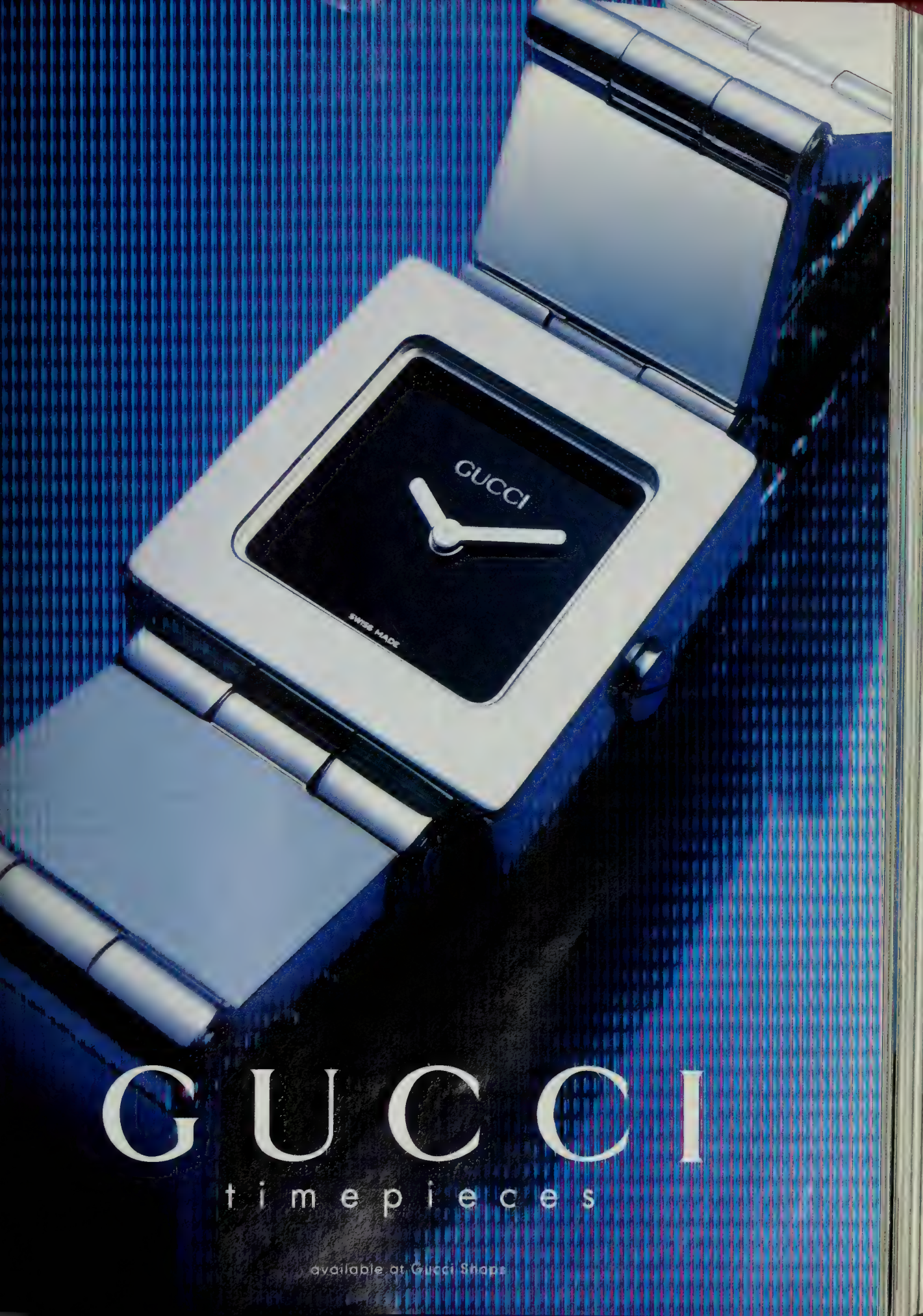
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VANITY FAIR is published by The Condé Nast Publications Inc.,
Condé Nast Building, 350 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10017
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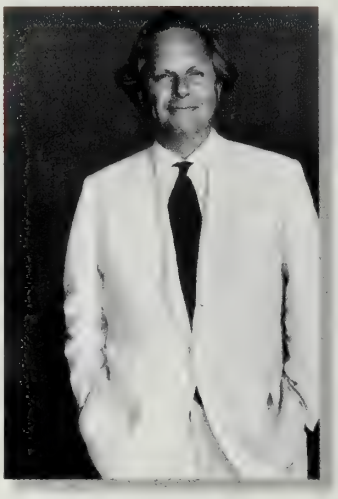


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Fathers and Sons



It's difficult to imagine two men as disparate as Al Gore and Sonny Liston, both of whom are profiled in this issue. They were raised in the Jim Crow South, but grew up worlds apart—Gore, scion of a Beltway grandee, in the privileged enclaves of Washington and Tennessee; Liston, the illiterate brawler, in the impoverished backwoods of Arkansas. What they do have in common is this: both were shaped immeasurably by their fathers. With remarkably telling results.

As contributing editor Marjorie Williams explains in her smart, perceptive profile of Gore, "The Chosen One" (page 116), the vice president is nothing if not his father's son. Senator Albert Gore Sr., now 90 and retired, was the consummate gentleman politician, a liberal Tennessee Democrat who remained popular despite his opposition to segregation and the war in Vietnam. From the moment Albert junior was born, in 1948, he was groomed to exceed his father's success; at prep school, classmates called him "Ozymandias" because of his relentless self-assurance. If it is possible to breed a president, Al Gore is a kind of political test-tube baby.

It has not been a flawless experiment, to be sure. There are Gore's thunderingly dull, boilerplate speeches, his go-along-to-get-along fund-raising gaffes, the lame explanations ("no controlling legal authority"), and the whole sad *Love Story* episode. Evidently there is such a thing as overbreeding. Although Gore is the early-on favorite to be our next president (and we could do a lot worse), the Democrats—the Donner Party of American politics—have a tradition of eating their young on the long journey to Election Day.

Gore stands in striking contrast to Sonny Liston, the former heavyweight champion, who died in either late 1970 or early 1971—the medical examiner could ne be sure. On page 146, contributing edi Nick Tosches reveals in his remarkable p file "The Outlaw Champ" that Liston was quintessential Lost Son, a latter-day Cain Gore's Abel. Liston had a reckless, rudderl youth. His father, Tobey, beat him mercil ly. Liston never learned to read and by early teens was a homeless dropout who vived with his fists. His perfectly ironic n name, Sonny, was earned in the Misso State Penitentiary, where he served two ye for robbery and larceny.

Liston's one salvation was boxing. He was magnificent terrifying, a man-child who pummeled the greats of the da Floyd Patterson, twice—with breathtaking ease. Despite the m ey and the fame, Liston remained mistrustful and out of cont he surrounded himself with bent-nose "advisers" who encourag his criminal tendencies, which included robbery, assault, and legedly) drug dealing and rape.

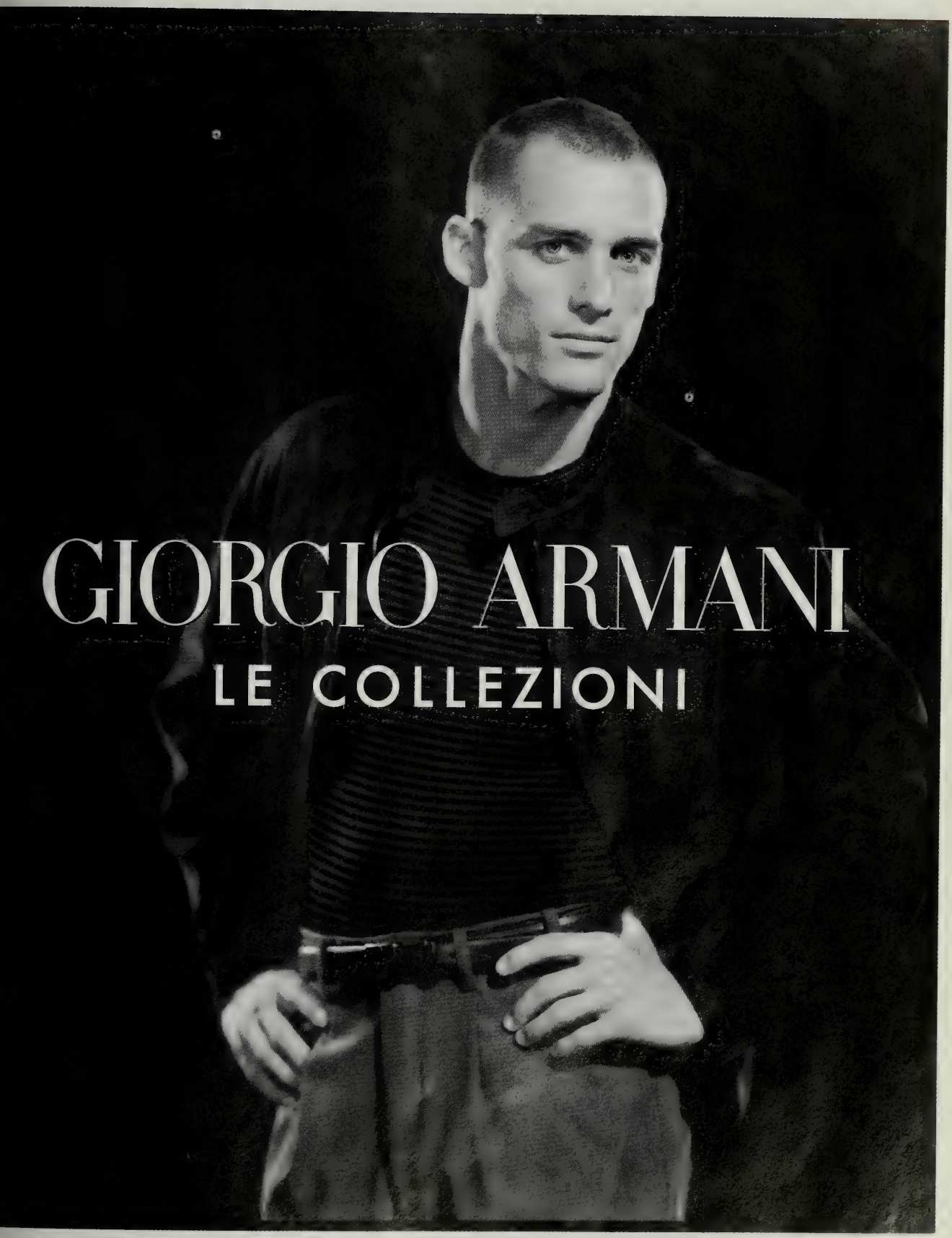
And then there was the night in 1965 when he took a dive his championship bout against Cassius Clay. When Liston taken down in the first round by Clay's infamous "phant punch," he earned a permanent place in the pantheon of Am can sports villainy. Liston died discredited, with a quarter-ou of heroin in the house. When a coroner examined his body, found faint scars on Liston's back. They weren't the result any beatings in the ring, but of his father's rages, a quarter century earlier.

Graydon Carter

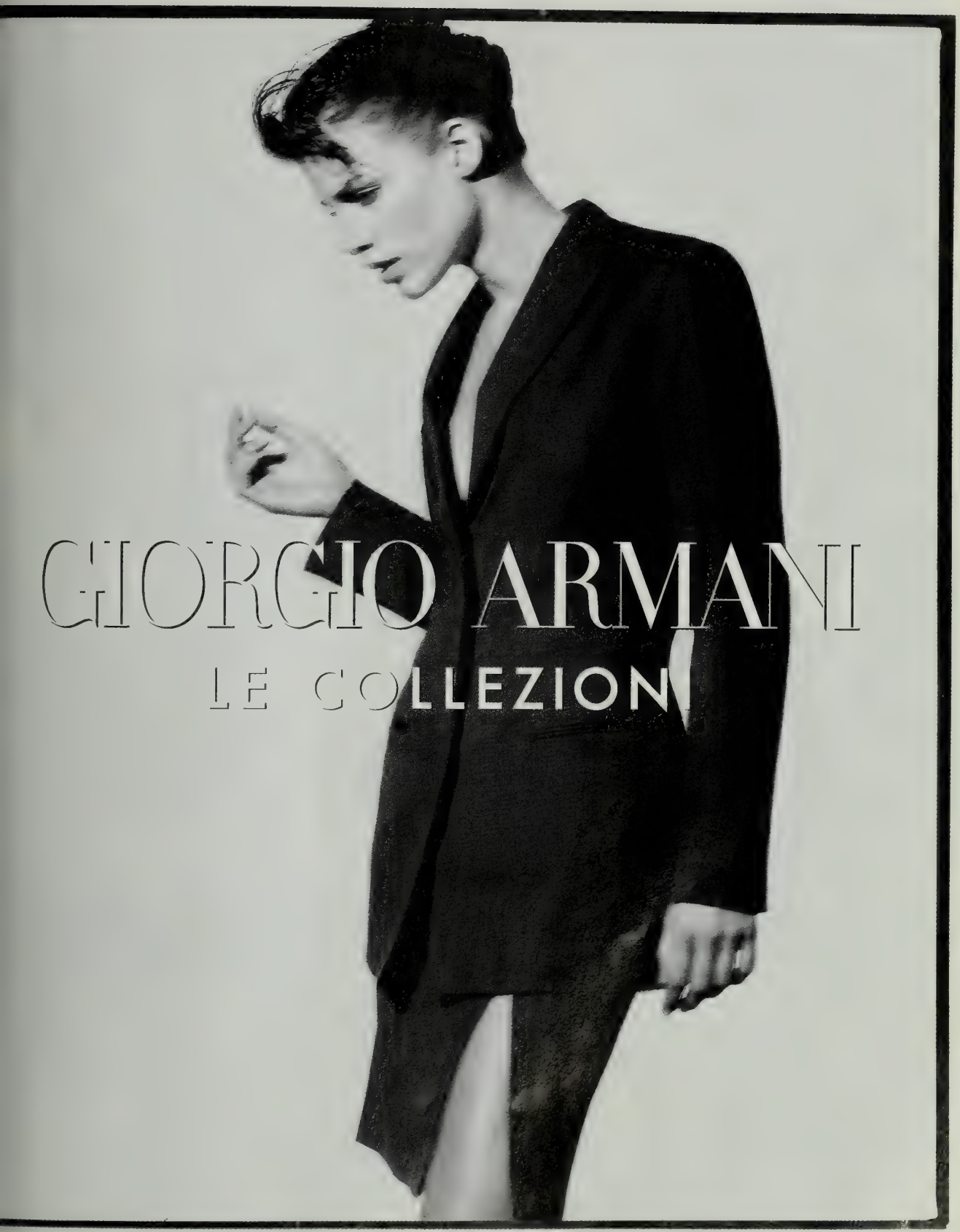


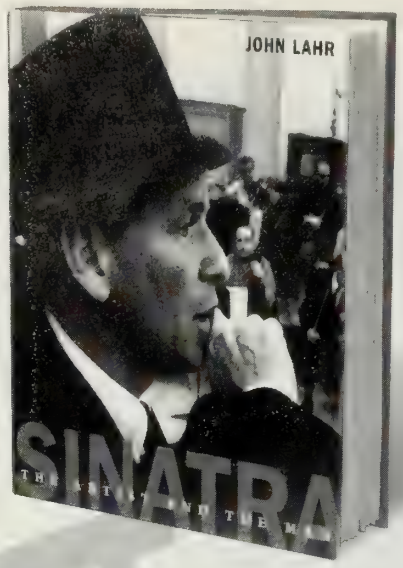
Claire de Lune

ON THE COVER
Claire Danes wears a dress and jacket by Christian Dior by John Galliano. Shoes by Jutta Neumann. Hair by Didier Malige. Makeup by Tom Pecheux. Hair products from Matrix. Makeup from Christian Dior. Styled by Lori Goldstein. *Right:* Danes in Cornwall, Conn., September 1997. Dress by Jill Stuart. Photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Annie Leibovitz.


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THE ARTIST AND THE MAN

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Contributors



"I've brightened up in life," says contributing editor **Nick Tosches,** who frequently writes about the criminal underworld, "but I'm still drawn to darkne No wonder, then, that Tosches is fascinated by former heavyweight champion Sonny Liston, whom he profiles in this issue. "He seemed beyond the law," Tosc says, "and beyond black and white." The story—which took Tosches to Chicag St. Louis, and Las Vegas—provided everything a writer could want: flamboyar characters, gritty detective work, new friendships, and material for a forthcomi book. In the meantime, Tosches's 1992 book about Dean Martin, *Dino,* is the basis for Martin Scorsese's next film; writer Nicholas Pileggi is co-writing the screenplay, and it is scheduled to go into production this spring.



Contributing editor **Ingrid Sischy** first saw the work of Paul Strand in depth 20 years ago, when she received a curatorial internship at New York's Museum of Modern Art. "I remember the great pleasure of looking through a large box of his photographs," says Sischy, who profiles the photographer on page 136, "and really getting to understand his voice." Though photography is her first love, Sischy hates to pose for pictures. "I'm from South Africa," she explains. "Maybe it's tribal."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38


Turns out roughing up punks ain't really necessary. On account of most guys and gals hurt *themselves* by not getting enough calcium. So reach out for 3 glasses of milk a day. Your body will thank you. Especially if we don't have to tell you again.
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From the bestselling author of *Three Blind Mice*—revealing portraits of the men who would rule the information age

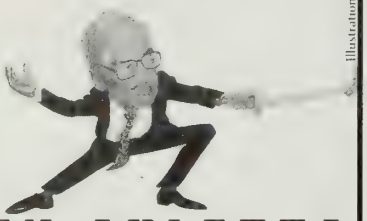


Illustration Patrick D. Milburn

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Contributors

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36



"He's capable of more intimate conversations than any other politician I've covered," contributing editor **Marjorie Williams** says of Vice President Al Gore, whom she profiles on page 116. "But only off the record." The story sent her from California to Florida and back to California in 36 hours. "Life in the bubble," says Williams, who accompanied Gore on Air Force Two, "is at once luxurious and isolating for politicians."



GASPER TRINGALE

Although he studied film at N.Y.U., **Henry Alford** has never campaigned for any cinematic awards. "I have always been an un-candidate," says Alford, who writes about those who *do* campaign, particularly during Oscar season. Alford reviews books for New York's *Newsday* and has lived in Manhattan for 15 years. But now he's planning a move to Los Angeles—at the height of Oscar season. "I need a change," he explains. "Gardening could happen."



GASPER TRINGALE

"When I first moved to New York, I lived directly across the street from Keith McNally," says editor-at-large **Matt Tyrnauer,** who on page 138 assesses the restaurateur's SoHo apartment. Tyrnauer has since moved to an apartment elsewhere in SoHo that is equidistant from McNally's front door and his wildly fashionable restaurant Balthazar.



GASPER TRINGALE

As newspapers go, contributing editor **James Wolcott** prefers the *New York Post* because, he says, "I like a tabloid I can breeze through." Wolcott, who writes about *The New York Times* on page 46, reads all papers front to back, skipping the sports section and all service-related articles. "I just whip through those because I don't care about the latest in Mediterranean food," says Wolcott, who insists that he *always* refolds the paper after he has read it.

David Kamp was never a Boy Scout, but he knows a few things about merit badges and spelunking. "I was in the eye of the early-1970s, can-women-be-Scout-leaders? hurricane," says the contributing editor, who reports on the National Boy Scout Jamboree in this issue. "My mother was my older brother's Scout-troop leader—which caused a minor controversy in central New Jersey." Given the family *scandale,* Kamp says, "By osmosis, I've had enough of Scouting."



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ANGELS AND INSECTS



Take that! For Christopher Hitchens the public reaction to the deaths of Mother Teresa and Princess Diana registered as pious fawning and false elevation, which he found hard to stomach.

If Christopher Hitchens thought life was tough in the United States in the aftermath of the deaths of Diana and Mother Teresa ["Princess Di, Mother T., and Me," December], he should be grateful he wasn't living in Britain at the time. This country was held in the fascist grip of a dictatorship based on emotion and sentimentality. The scale of media self-censorship was all-encompassing. Critical views were simply banned from our screens and newspapers, all with an aim to bullying everyone into mass psychosis. Intellectuals have a duty to confront people with issues and arguments, and the media have an obligation to present those views for debate. In each case Christopher Hitchens and *Vanity Fair* are to be thoroughly commended.

PAUL COURTINE
Liverpool, England

I GUESS IT'S SAFE TO SAY that in Mr. Hitchens's world no good deed goes uncriticized. I wasn't sure if his remark about "a simpering Bambi narcissist and a thieving, fanatical Albanian dwarf" was an attempt at highbrow sarcasm or just plain acerbic chatter from a self-important media bottom feeder. I know that Princess Diana and Mother Teresa were just people, not deities. They were as flawed as any of us, but the comments made by Mr. Hitchens leave a bitter aftertaste.

CHRISTOPHER M. VAUGHN
Indianapolis, Indiana

I'D LIKE TO SEE MR. HITCHENS going to leper colonies to comfort the victims, holding AIDS patients in his arms, or walking across fields that are littered with land mines. Diana and Mother Teresa were two of the most charitable people that the world has ever known.

I have never read another article in *Vanity Fair* that infuriated me as much as this one.

CHRISTOPHER R. RAWLINGS
Boston, Massachusetts

I WOULD RATHER DEBATE Mother Teresa's morality with someone like Mr. Hitchens than with many of the cradle Catholics I know who refer to her as a saint but then disagree with much of what she said and stood for. In fact, it is precisely Mr. Hitchens's vehemence which makes me wonder if he isn't closer to conversion than many weekly churchgoers.

RACHEL ELLIOTT RIGOLINO
Highland, New York

DO MY REALLY DEEP and sincere feelings for poor Diana deserve the mockery of Hitchens? She had grown and matured into a lovely and intelligent woman. We will never know if she would have become the wife of Dodi Fayed, or if she would have remained a fighter for truth. Women in the millions identified with Diana, who wouldn't accept an unfaithful husband. His neglect and disdain drove her to another man's arms.

PATRICIA QUIGG
Pawcatuck, Connecticut

HYPOCRISY, LIKE VIRGINITY, is easily deflated, and I, for one, am glad that you publish writers like Christopher Hitchens to do exactly that. His diary account provided an astute assessment of the echo chamber surrounding media coverage of the deaths of Princess Diana and Mother Teresa.

In a magazine that can sometimes be caught fawning over celebrity, Hitchens's razor tongue is a needed dose of reality. Sure, he is arrogant and opinionated, but he is also often right. And that is what keeps me coming back for more.

ERIN ECKERT
New Orleans, Louisiana

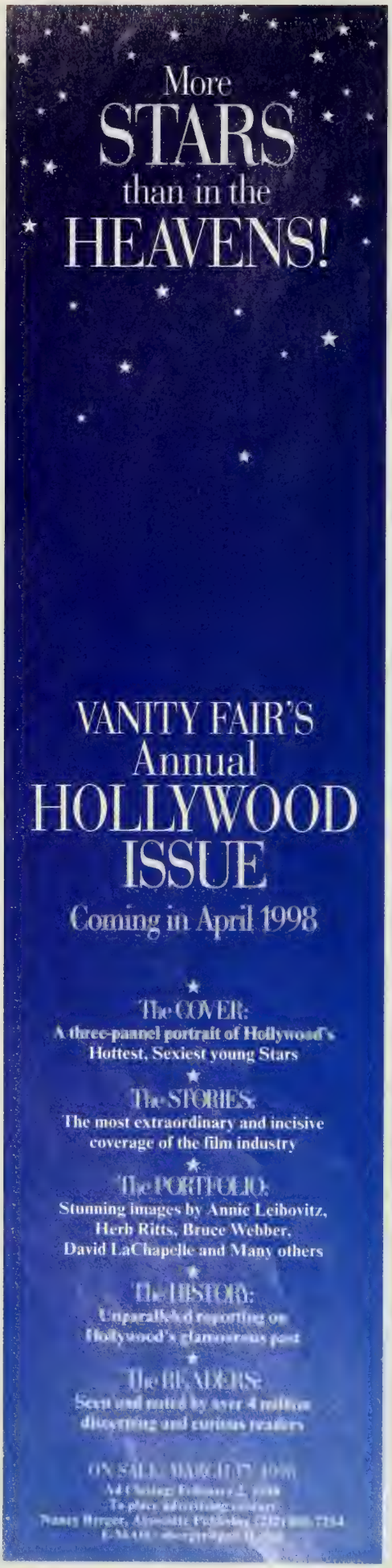
MR. HITCHENS'S MEDIA sojourn is chronicled with a lack of self-importance

ILLUSTRATION BY BARRY BLITT


A room not yet decorated is a playground for the mind


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that is the hallmark of his best work. His ability to see above his own concerns and beneath the greater concerns to the elemental truth of the moment is a rare gift. Could we have a Christopher Hitchens issue? No? Then perhaps a pony for Christmas?

LIZ MONTGOMERY
Jupiter, Florida

HEY, DO YOU FOLKS actually invite Christopher Hitchens inside for your office holiday party, or do you just leave a piece of cheese for him outside the back door?

DAN RILEY
Vista, California

PLEASE, OH PLEASE, don't make me listen to "Goodbye England's Rose" on the car radio again! My hysterical attempts to quickly change the station are liable to cause my own tragic accident.

STEPHANIE CONDAS
Plainfield, New Jersey

Microsoft's Hard Drive

YOUR REFERENCES TO Bill Gates in "The New Establishment" [October] contain a number of errors.

Bill has never threatened to move Microsoft offshore for any reason. How would a software company—whose value is the brains and talent of its thousands of professionals—"move offshore"?

Bill never threatened to walk out because of a brief delay in his appointment with President Clinton.

Bill did not complain about a satire of him on America Online. He did complain that the privacy of other members of his family was being violated. AOL withdrew the feature because it was getting little interest from subscribers, as AOL has stated publicly.

You inaccurately state the price of Microsoft's acquisition of Dimension X. (The price is private, but your published number is off substantially.) There also was no Dimension X–sponsored party with a cake castigating the sale or Microsoft.

In your profile of Larry Ellison, you say Bill's $200 million donation to public libraries was "self-serving." You evidently bought Mr. Ellison's line that the only reason for the donation was to upstage a charitable donation by Larry the next day. In fact, the date of Bill's donation had been planned for weeks.

The Gates gift, to provide access to technology for everyone in needy rural and urban communities, was $200 million in cash, not software.

MICH MATHEW
General manager, Public Relations
Microsoft
Redmond, Washington

VANITY FAIR *REPLIES: Regarding Bill Gates's reported threat to move Microsoft offshore if federal anti-trust regulators did not cool their investigations of his company, our article in October's "New Establishment" cited a recent biography of Gates,* Overdrive, *by the veteran* Seattle Post-Intelligencer *writer James Wallace. Microsoft does not like Wallace, whose prior book,* Hard Drive, *reported in detail on Microsoft's allegedly anti-competitive practices.* Hard Drive *was also cited by federal judge Stanley Sporkin during 1995 hearings on the Justice Department's anti-trust charges against Microsoft. Microsoft later complained that "Judge Sporkin's views were shaped by* Hard Drive*" and that the judge was "fixated" on the book.*

The information about Gates's attempt to walk out on a tardy President Clinton was supplied by a highly placed Microsoft executive.

The Dimension X staff party with a cake portraying Gates as a Star Trek *villain was organized and attended by employees of Dimension X; one of* Vanity Fair*'s sources attended the party and ate a piece of the cake.*

As for Gates's $200 million donation to put libraries on-line, our story did not say that the gift was in "software," nor did it imply that the announcement was planned to upstage Oracle chairman Larry Ellison's charitable donation—just that it happened that way.

Finally, it is indisputable that Microsoft's attorneys complained to America Online about its feature "The Secret Files of Bill Gates." Its author, Andrew Leonard, has said that AOL killed the feature immediately after receiving a letter from Microsoft's attorneys claiming that it was defamatory.

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James Wolcott



Urban sprawl: Unlike *The New York Times*'s previous incarnation (and the tabloids), the new *Times* is too unwieldy to handle on the subway, where many New Yorkers actually read the newspaper.

PAPER MONSTER

The New York Times has long tyrannized the cultural elite with its sheer bulk. Last September, the behemoth grew to six sections daily. And in color. But whereas the *Times* used to want to make its readers better citizens, it now seems more interested in making them better consumers

Never mind the quality of its reporting, the breadth of its national and foreign coverage, the stern reprimands of its editorials, the make-or-break power of its reviews—for many, the most awesome aspect of *The New York Times* is its sheer payload as a physical object. Weighing as much as three pounds, the Sunday edition of the *Times* has always been a lap crusher—a voluminous tablet. Buying it entails heavy lifting; reading it requires total immersion. Taking his cue from media guru Marshall McLuhan, who observed that people don't so much read a newspaper as slip into it like a warm bath, Tom Wolfe exalted the Sunday *Times* as "that vat, that spa, that regional physiotherapy tank," where a million souls went for weekly baptism. Other newspapers are huge—the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*—but only the *Times* inspires such religion. In the mid-70s, the daily *Times* began to bulge as well, expanding from two sections to four under the direction of executive editor A. M. Rosenthal, who, emulating the success of Clay Felker at *New York* magazine, added service and lifestyle features to appeal to the freshly minted yuppies swarming out of the subways in a mad search for sushi. The mega-dosage of these new sections brought old print junkies to near despair. The critic Seymour Krim, in a 1988 essay for *The Nation* called "The 215,000 Word Habit: Should I Give My Life to *The Times*?" (back then the daily *Times* ran approximately 215,000 words of text—and a million on Sunday), described the dense labor it took to plow through the paper, his Talmudic sense of duty like "a massive hanging goiter" of guilt. "If a reader feels that only by brilliant eye-editing . . . can he reach the last page without putting a sixty-foot trench in the middle of his day, something is gravely out of whack. Would it take a nuclear wipe-out to make

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEF ASTOR

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Love

The Times start all over again, lithe and quick?" It would now. For last September, *The New York Times* mushroomed again, going from four sections to six on weekdays (except for Monday, which now has five) in the New York distribution area. Sports now gets its own corral each day, dining and home furnishings receive royal treatment during the week, and on Fridays there are two arts sections—one for performing arts, one for fine arts. (Even the once svelte Saturday edition has doubled in format from two to four sections, offering a special new spread aimed at culture vultures called "Arts & Ideas.")

This growth spurt amounts to a bold strategic counterthrust on the part of the *Times*. At a time when attention spans are shrinking and most papers are trying to become more snackable, modeling themselves on *USA Today*'s handy menu of news nuggets, here's the *Times*, assigning its readers more homework! The workload that made Krim groan now looks like the good old days. The daily word count of the *Times* has gone up to 250,000—a number that increases on days when there are special supplements like the one on global warming. But in an important regard the *Times* bowed to the influence of *USA Today*, introducing color into its news pages for the first time in its history (an advance made possible by the company's $350 million investment in a new printing plant in College Point, Queens). The *Times* brain trust was quick to disabuse anyone that this brighter palette would result in pretty pastels and corny Americana. No, the *Times* would use its new technology to fine-tune its coverage rather than provide eye-candy. It would retain its funeral director's dignity. Even so, for some diehards it was the biggest shock since Ted Turner colorized *Casablanca* and made Humphrey Bogart look chalky.

The new era heralded by this revamp was made official a month later by an epochal change in the paper's high command. On October 16, Arthur Ochs "Punch" Sulzberger relinquished his post as chairman of the board of the New York Times Company after 24 years. It was he who made the decision to publish the Pentagon Papers in 1971, as we were reminded. He was succeeded by his son, Arthur O. Sulzberger Jr., who had been publisher of the *Times* since 1992, after filling various positions at the paper. When the company directors ratified the transfer of power, Arthur senior reportedly gave up his seat at the head of the table in the boardroom, but the son remained standing, saying, "If you think I'm sitting in that chair, you're nuts." Not elegantly phrased, but elegantly handled. It is prudent of the prince not to upstage even a departing king.

Under the guise of being known as the Good Gray Lady, the *Times* has always been a patriarchy in drag. From its purchase by Adolph Ochs in 1896, down through the male line of the Sulzberger family (following the marriage of Arthur Hays Sulzberger to Ochs's daughter, Iphigene, in 1917), the paper has been an old-fashioned fiefdom. Yet there is no disputing that under the stewardship of Arthur junior the *Times* has become more diversity-conscious in promoting and covering women and minorities, especially gays. "Since Arthur has been publisher, being gay at the *New York Times* has been an absolute non-problem," the former *Times* writer Alex Jones told *The Washington Post*. He has helped make the paper less fuddy-duddy and more touchy-feely. He has loosened its suspenders. The old *Times* stood on a pedestal as a guardian of progressive values. The new *Times* wants to be more of a pal.

A pal that's always trying to put the bite on you. Merely lifting the new *Times* requires octopus arms, as the sections and increasing number of ad inserts spill in various directions. These days one can hardly pick up a copy without pieces of it falling out, like loose tiles from the spacecraft *Mir*. Even when the paper remains intact, the sections often arrive out of order, with Section E preceding Section C, etc. Its sheer plethora makes it impossible to read on the subway unless you have a news buddy to baby-sit parts of it for you. Otherwise it cascades to the crummy floor. The *Times* is now more than a newspaper; it's a Modular Information, Entertainment, and Advertising Delivery System, assembly required. Its mission: to colonize every aspect of our lives as a marketing outpost.



The *Times*, it is a-changing: *From top*, the many, many sections of the new *New York Times* include "Dining In," which alternates Wednesdays with "Dining Out"; Thursday's "House & Home," which replaced "Living"; "The Arts," here featuring Robert Gober's Madonna-with-drainpipe installation at MOCA; the newly colorful "Metro Section," here showcasing a cranberry bog in New Jersey; "Sports," which had stood alone once a week and now appears daily; "Science Times," which is no longer followed by arts pages; and "Business Day." *Above*, a full-color front page of *The New York Times*, November 17, 1997, with a shot of Madeleine Albright and the interior minister of Bahrain.

For all its extra wordage, there isn't appreciably more hard-news coverage in the paper. A comparison study done by this magazine of representative issues of the daily *Times* before and after the recent expansion indicates that international, national, and metro coverage is steady to marginally down in average number of pages per week. The newsprint explosion has come primarily in the service sectors of the paper, where the use of color has been the most froufrou. While few of the front-page news photos gain anything by being in color (a mug shot of a suspected terrorist doesn't sing off the page just because he's in an orange jumpsuit), the lavish spreads in the lifestyle sections help stimulate the gimme glands. The photographs function as luxury showrooms. *I must have that vase!*

Even some of the non–consumer articles seem to contain product placements, as witness the opening sentence of a foot-kissy profile of the author-activist Bell Hooks by Michel Marriott: "While the folksy, funky strains of a Celtic-Afro band played from a *sleek Bang & Olufsen compact disk player,* light and shadows danced freely about Bell Hooks's modest-size living room as if they were being cast by an invisible Calder mobile" (my italics). Subtitled "An antimaterialist practices what she preaches," the article goes on to cite Hooks's minimalist taste, her affinity for the monastic life, her intellectual critique of "consumption for consumption's sake." It's as if the *Times* were canonizing her to cover its own tracks. Or should I say money trail?

Certainly the *Times* doesn't practice what it preaches when it comes to anti-materialism. Consumption for consumption's sake is what drives the new *New York Times.* The point of the new sections is to cater to the appetites of urban nesters who are consolidating their career gains and want to pamper themselves with the best and most money can buy. The yuppies A. M. Rosenthal once wooed have reached middle age; now they're muppies. Many of these muppies have moved to the suburbs, which is an important growth area for the *Times* now that city sales have stagnated. The *Times* knows that the way to their wallets is through their stomachs. Restaurant reviews have always been important in the *Times*—a dropped star for a name restaurant can signal a tectonic shift in the foodie world—but the boost in food coverage since the paper expanded in September has been gut-busting. The new "Dining In/Dining Out" section on Wednesdays offers almost double the pages of the dining coverage in the old "Living" section, with copious recipes, articles which endow chefs with the *auteur* mystique of movie directors ("Jean-Georges Vongerichten makes his debut with a Thai shrimp dish that's just a little French"), and cornucopia close-ups of special dishes that are either mouthwatering or sick-making, depending on your mood. (After I flip through "Dining In/Dining Out," I often feel the need to lie down.)

I was thinking about all this one sunny morning last week when I was sitting in my armchair and reading a review of Phyllis Rose's new book, "The Year of Reading Proust." The reviewer said that Ms. Rose was conscious of herself as a member of the literary community. It occurred to me that although I might not seem to be doing much at that exact moment (I was still in my nightgown, as a matter of fact), I was part of that community, along with the reviewer, Ms. Rose and Proust. The thought cheered me up.

—Kennedy Fraser, "A Private Eye,"
The New York Times, November 24, 1997.

Pushy salesmanship also pervades the arts pages, which are so full of fanfare and rich in illustration that you'd think





Men of their *Times*: Freshly appointed *Times* chairman Arthur O. Sulzberger Jr. poses with his father, Arthur Sulzberger, at the newspaper's $350 million printing plant in College Point, Queens.

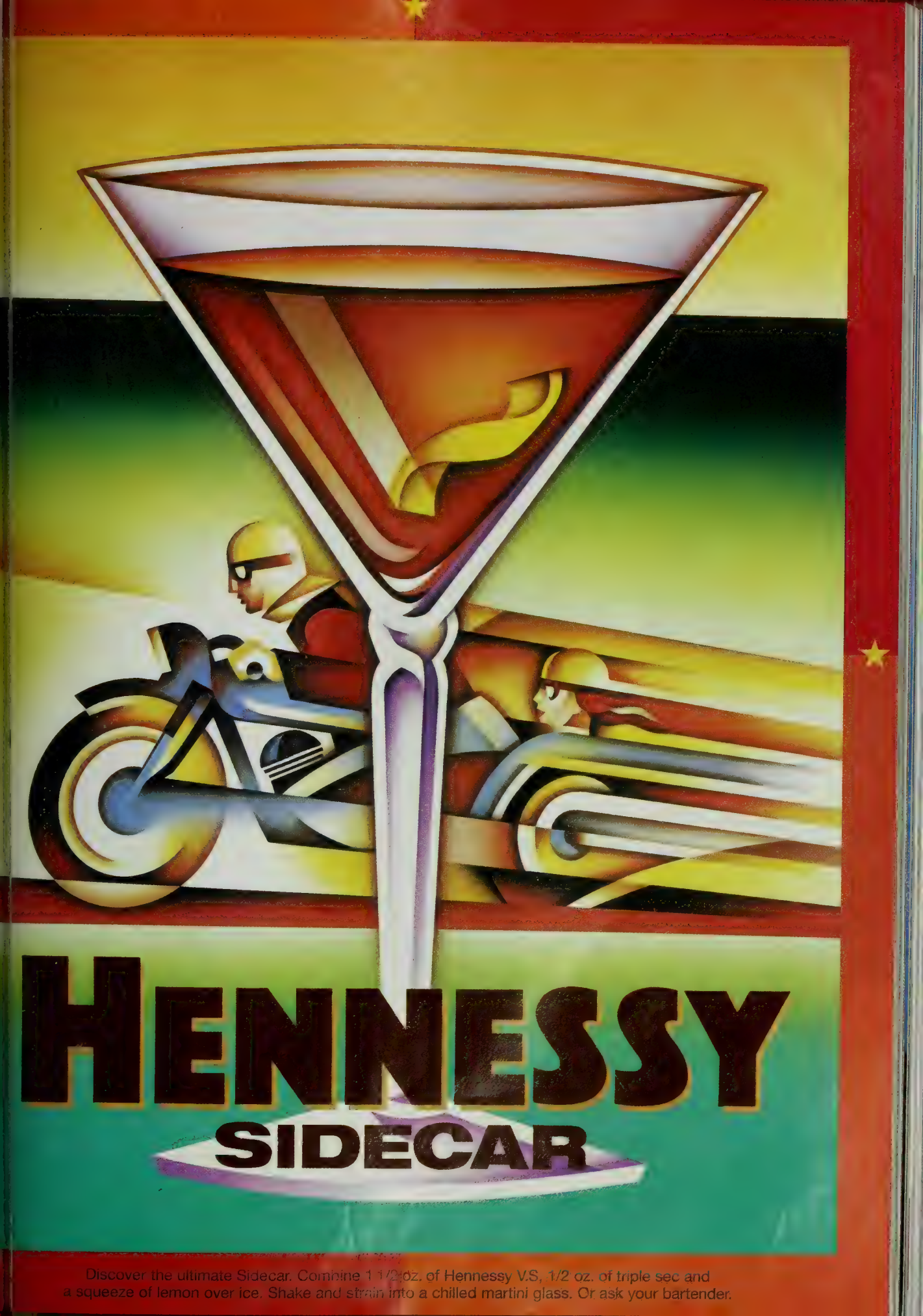
we were living in another Renaissance. Grab your shopping cart and stock up on art. It is only when you look closely that you can see the patches—the artificial pepping-up of the moribund TV coverage ("'Seinfeld,' a Finale? And Yada Yada Yada"), the gossamer woolgathering of its new columnist Kennedy Fraser (see above), the methinks-me-spots-a-pattern meditations on cultural motifs, such as Neil Strauss's "Critic's Notebook" on flight imagery in pop songs: "In adulthood, psychologists say, dreams of flying represent freedom and the desire to rise above the limitations of day-to-day life. The intent of most good pop songs is the same: to enable the listeners, for three or four minutes, to transcend their problems, worries and concerns." (And what better way to appreciate that soaring transcendence than by listening to those hits on a sleek Bang & Olufsen compact-disc player?) Perhaps the fanciest display of criticism-as-sales-pitch was the postmodern reading that the *Times* art critic Roberta Smith rendered of the controversial installation at L.A.'s Museum of Contemporary Art by Robert Gober, who is described as "an openly gay artist and a lapsed Catholic," two of the *Times*'s favorite categories. She interprets his most disputed sculpture, which shows the Virgin Mary with a drainpipe driven through her midsection, as an allegorical reminder that "she was a conduit, through which God gave the world His Son." Nice try, but it doesn't occur to her that a drainpipe is a rather crude device to symbolize female plumbing. (Jesus didn't pop out of no manhole.) The bright spot in the *Times* arts coverage has been the Indian-summer refulgence of film critic Janet Maslin, who seems to have bloomed with confidence ever since panning that widely hyped cinematic hair ball *Gummo*. ("October is early, but not too early to acknowledge Harmony Korine's *Gummo* as the worst film of the year.") She even dismissed Clint Eastwood's *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* ("When Clint Eastwood's film version of the hugely popular *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* arrives in Savannah, Ga., it offers the standard shot of Spanish moss . . . Sure enough, it's guided-tour time"), which a few years ago would have been sacrilege.

The ad-friendliness of the arts, food, and furnishing sections has helped spur the share price of *Times* stock, which had been dead money through much of the bull market and had become a nagging sore for management. It took a long time for light to crack through the clouds: Arthur senior, unable to contain the good news, announced at his own farewell ceremony in the newsroom on October 16 that the stock had just struck an all-time high. But the combination of bountiful harvest on the ad side and progressive tradition on the edit side has caused a strange split at the *Times*. The paper is trying to wear a plump smile of success and a worried frown of social concern at the same time. The message from West 43rd isn't "Eat, Drink, and Be Merry." It's more like "Eat, Drink, and Show Concern for Those Less Fortunate." One day the paper is running an item on a members' club for Manolo Blahnik shoes with an initiation fee of $7,200, two days later a cover story called "Poor Without Cars Find Trek to Work Can Be a Job." Another hard-luck story was titled "A Slide into Peril, with No One to Catch Her."

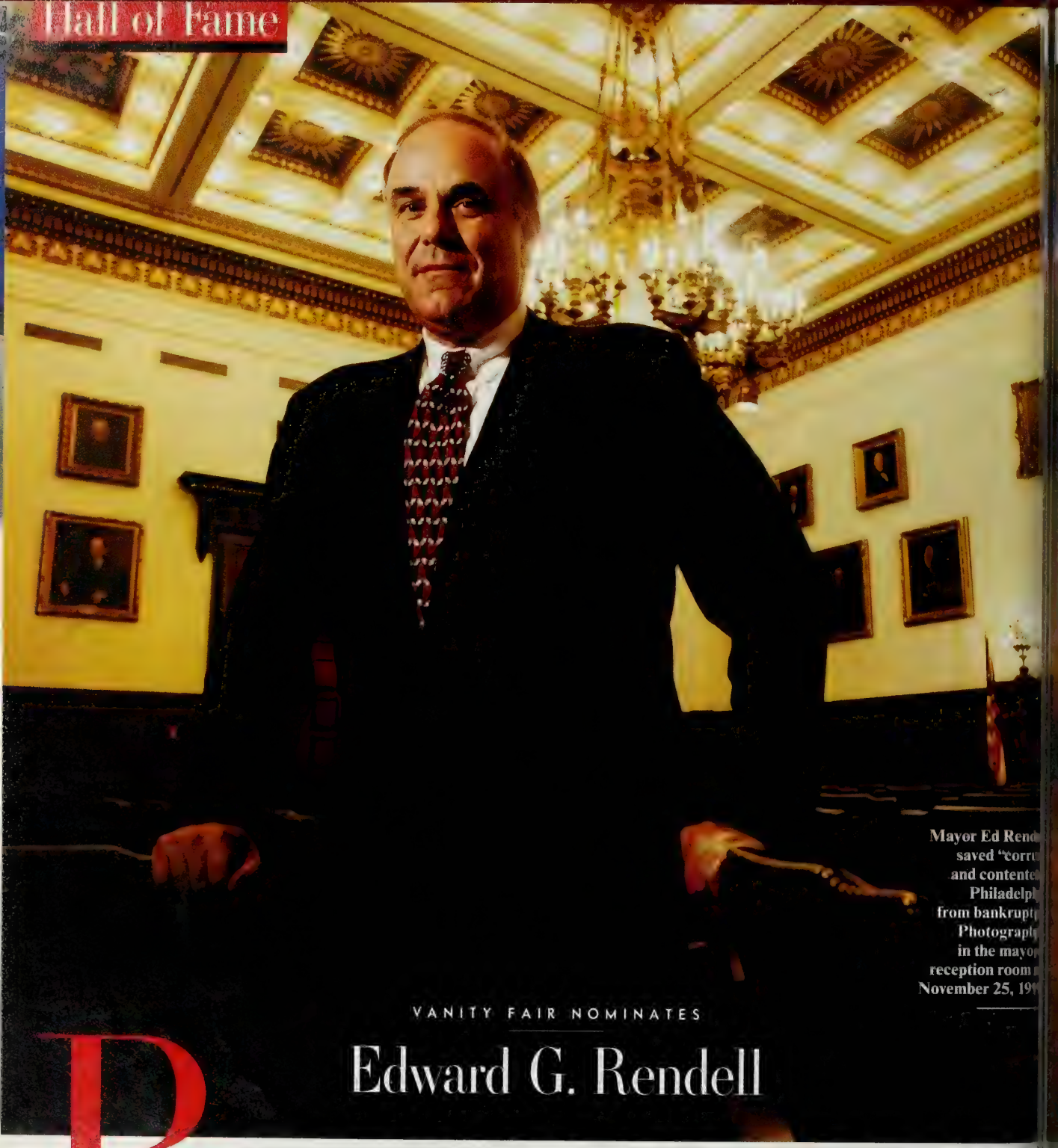
Some of these human-travail articles border on the bizarre, like the front-page story of November 7 by Jim Yardley about a woman who used to parade naked in her apartment save for gold slippers, and watch "the sun fall like a red stone" over New Jersey. Yardley, who harbors poetic tendencies, informs us, "When Ms. Liebman gazed westward, she imagined herself young, living in Israel and looking out at the Mediterranean, not the Hudson." Ms. Liebman sounds like a bad Neil Simon play waiting to happen (Maureen Stapleton waltzing with empty air), but her plight is quite concrete—the reason she can no longer pad around bare-bod and gaze upon her Mediterranean mirage is that a new high-rise built by Donald Trump now obstructs her view. The sun and moon have been taken from her. Despite this sudden eclipse, Ms. Liebman won't abandon her current apartment, in part because she can't afford to, in part because she's attached to her small personal strip of Manhattan. Yardley writes, "Her New York is Fairway on Broadway and the matzoh ball soup at Fine & Schapiro on West 72nd Street. She remembers the time she helped Placido Domingo flag a cab. Only in New York, she said."

> "Merely lifting the new *Times* requires octopus arms."

That this hokum was on page one reveals how morally obliged the *Times* feels to show "heart" and speak on behalf of the "little people" left in the dust of galloping capitalism even as the rest of the paper is all-systems-go—splurge, baby, splurge! Understand: it's not the attention paid to victims and other sad cases that one minds; it's the schmaltz. It's the tender catch in the writer's voice. The sentimentality in the feature writing—this in a paper which used to pride itself on its poker face and Jack Webb monotone—seems to be welling up in direct proportion to the *Times*'s financial prosperity. The old woman with her worn gold slippers and matzoh-ball soup provides the moral trade-off for all those Manolo Blahniks and exotic shrimp dishes. The old *New York Times* would have called for legislation. The new *New York Times* feels her pain. It's the cash cow that cares. *Moo.* □



Discover the ultimate Sidecar. Combine 1 1/2 oz. of Hennessy V.S, 1/2 oz. of triple sec and a squeeze of lemon over ice. Shake and strain into a chilled martini glass. Or ask your bartender.



Mayor Ed Rend
saved "corru
and contente
Philadelp
from bankrupt
Photograph
in the mayo
reception room
November 25, 19

VANITY FAIR NOMINATES

Edward G. Rendell

BECAUSE as mayor of Philadelphia he took a city that was downtrodden and scared and dying and has restored to it the most important emotion of all—hope. BECAUSE he saved the city from sure bankruptcy by declaring war on the unions and extracting hundreds of millions of dollars in concessions. BECAUSE he balanced a deeply in-the-red budget without severely curtailing services, and without looking to the federal and state governments for more funds. BECAUSE in the day and age of the cookie-cutter politician, who doesn't go 10 minutes without taking a poll, he thinks and speaks with his heart and is utterly unafraid to be human. BECAUSE he shows up for municipal-pool openings in swimming trunks decorated with flags of the world's nations, and once, in order to raise $5,000 for the city's recreation department, got into a wrestling match with a mascot—a six-foot pig. BECAUSE when he originally declined to appear with Mickey Mouse at a promotion for Disney, he justified it by saying, "I'd do the same for Bugs Bunny." BECAUSE, after being cajoled, he threw up his hands in frustration and said, "All right, I'll do the fucking mouse." BECAUSE he believes passionately in our cities, and fears that the economic boom has caused us to lose "the moral imperative" over them by leading us to wrongly assume that all the horrors of urban poverty have suddenly been solved. BECAUSE in the 23 months he has left in his final term, there is still so much that he alone can do for the city. BECAUSE Philadelphia will seem empty and sadly different without his remarkable presence. —BUZZ BISSINGER

PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN BECKER

The Chrysler Sebring Convertible

At night it turns into a planetarium.



You don't have to be Galileo to appreciate the new Chrysler Sebring Limited Convertible. A car that's as fun under blue skies as it is under spectacular constellations. But what makes it truly brilliant is that you can enjoy it year-round. Its specially lined top, for example, was designed to help keep sound out and warmth in. Plus, it offers the largest interior and trunk space of any convertible this side of the planet.* For more information, call 1.800.CHRYSLER or visit www.chryslercars.com. And see why Sebring is the best-selling convertible under the sun. Or the moon.

C H R Y S L E R

ENGINEERED TO BE GREAT CARS

*Based on a comparison of '97 competitive models

Duncan Sheik in his Tribeca apartment in December 1997. He spent much of his time at Brown honing his vocal style along with classmate Lisa Loeb. By 1996 both were well-connected pop stars.





Students routinely gather on the steps of Sayles Hall, overlooking the College Green.

SCHOOL FOR GLAMOUR

Long the runt of the Ivy League, Brown University has become a magnet for the children of A-list New Yorkers, Hollywood stars, Wall Street tycoons, and European jet-setters. What's behind the explosion of BMWs and Chanel jackets on its once quiet campus?

BY JENNET CONANT

Duncan Sheik majored in semiotics. "Don't ask," he says, insisting that the obscure study of cultural signs and symbols is "impossible to explain." After graduating from Brown University in 1992, Sheik headed to Los Angeles with dreams of breaking into the music business. One of his college roommates, Adam Cahan, was living there with Tracee Ellis Ross—the daughter of Diana Ross—so at least he had a place to stay. At Brown, Sheik had played in a band that featured fellow student Lisa Loeb, who was already on her way to pop stardom. He spent much of his time at Brown in the college recording studio, perfecting his vocal style. He even recorded a track with Tracee Ross because "she's got it in the genes."

That summer Ross gave the track to her mother's entertainment lawyer, John Frankenheimer, who passed it on to Immortal Records, a small but influential label. Six months



The Van Wickle Gates mark the official entrance to campus.

later, Immortal signed Sheik to a deal. In 1995 he was picked up by Atlantic Records.

Sheik is now the introspective, melancholy pop star of the moment. Last summer his plaintive love song "Barely Breathing" reached No. 16 on the *Billboard* chart. Sheik has everything a pop singer should have: moody lyrics, good looks, a heartthrob name, and great connections. After 18 months on tour, the soft-spoken 28-year-old is trying hard not to be blasé about what he admits was "a nice, easy way" into the business, thanks in part to Brown.

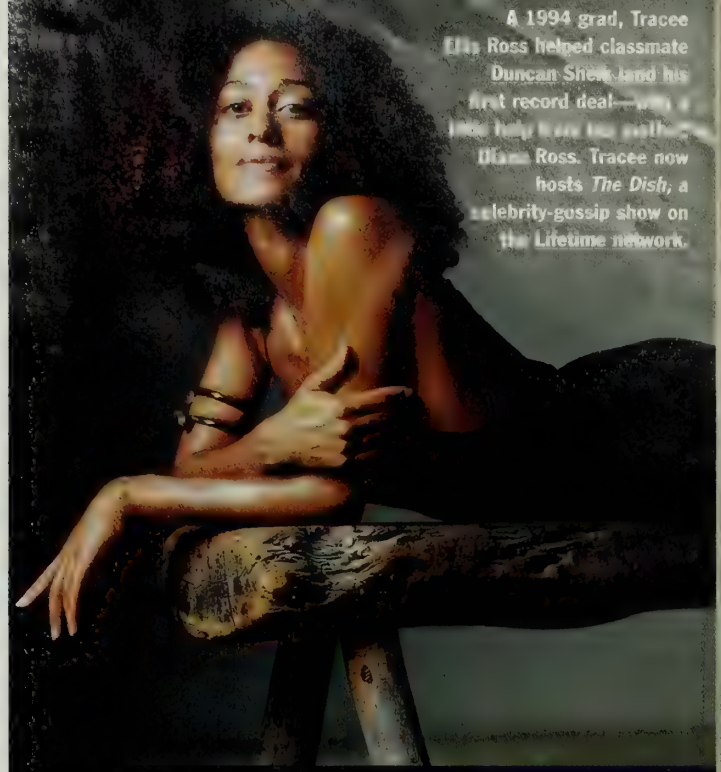
"My best friends are my friends from Brown," says Sheik, who recently attended a joint birthday party at New York's Bowery Bar for publicist Liz Cohen and Lauren DuPont, an editor at *Vogue* who married into the chemical dynasty. The Brown alumni in the tight-knit circle included Sheik's friend Cahan, who is now married to Samantha Kluge, the daughter of communications billionaire John Kluge, and Alexandre von Fürstenberg (the son of designer Diane von Fürstenberg and Prince Egon von und zu Fürstenberg), who recently married fellow Brown student Alexandra Miller, the daughter of duty-free magnate Robert Miller. "We still hang together, probably too much. We just can't seem to move on," says Sheik. "At the party, something like 17 of the 22 guys there went to Brown. Even if we were at opposite ends of the spectrum—artsy or entrepreneurial—we are still connected."

"It's called the Brown mafia," says Ross, who hosts Lifetime's new weekly pop-culture series, *The Dish.* Her older sister, Rhonda, who stars in the soap opera *Another World,* is also a Brown graduate. "An amazing number of us went to school together, are out doing our own thing in entertainment or the arts, and are in touch," says Ross. "For a creative person, it is the school to go to. It offers the freedom and the independence, and it has the allure."

The latest sign that Brown has leapfrogged Harvard as the Ivy's hottest school appeared on a recent episode of *Chicago Hope,* the CBS medical drama. Christine Lahti, who plays an ambitious heart surgeon, frets that if her daughter doesn't get into a top prep school, "*she doesn't stand a snowball's chance in hell of getting into Brown!*" And in James Brooks's new movie, *As Good as It Gets,* Jack Nicholson's high-powered publisher ecstatically announces that her daughter has gotten into Brown.

Pick up one of Brown's recent graduating-class rosters and it will read like a cross between *Roll Call, Rolling Stone,* and a *Suzy* column. In these competitive times, all the leading colleges have their pick of bright, talented students, but

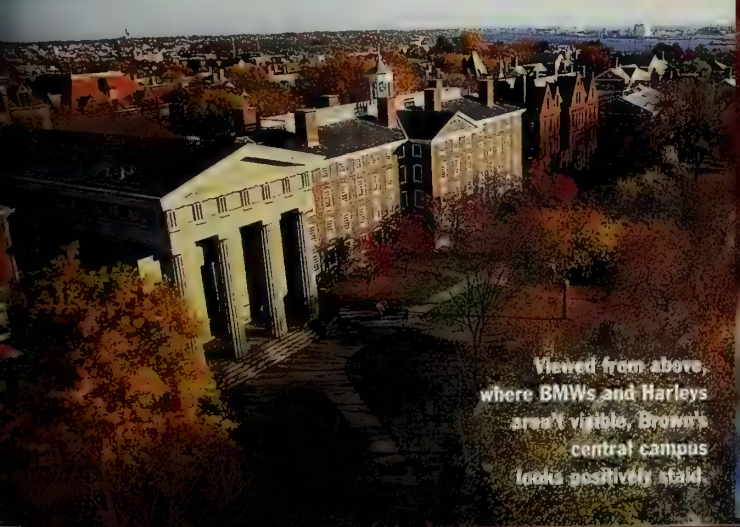
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONATHAN BECKER (SAYLES HALL, GATE, VIVA FARES); JULIAN BROAD (SHEIK); DAVID MICHALEK (ROSS); AND CATHERINE KARNOW (AERIAL VIEW). FOR DETAILS, SEE CREDITS PAGE



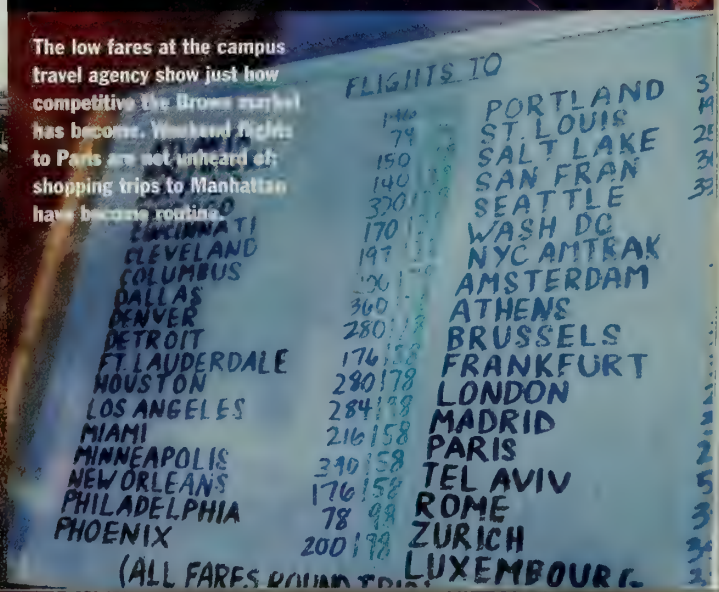
A 1994 grad, Tracee Ellis Ross helped classmate Duncan Sheik land his first record deal—with a little help from his mother, Diana Ross. Tracee now hosts *The Dish,* a celebrity-gossip show on the Lifetime network.



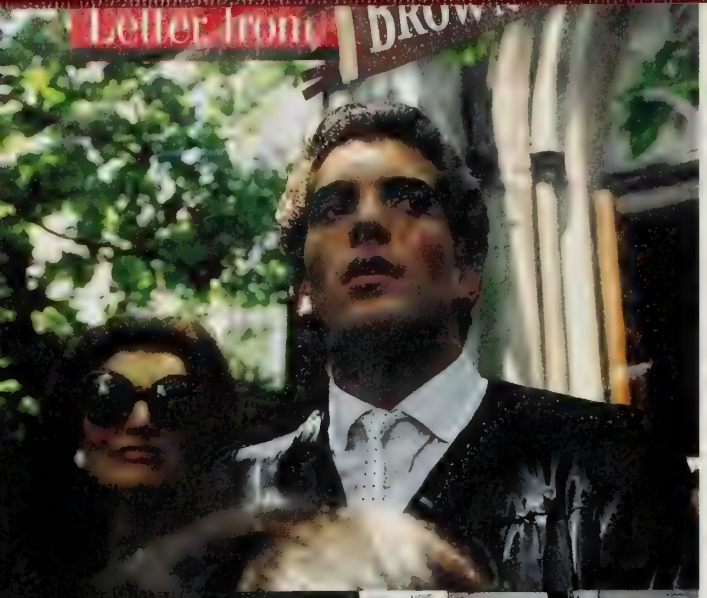
Foreign students such as Dhani Harrison (foreground), son of George Harrison, cluster at a popular Providence nightclub called Viva. ... These students are generally called "Euros," even if they're not European.

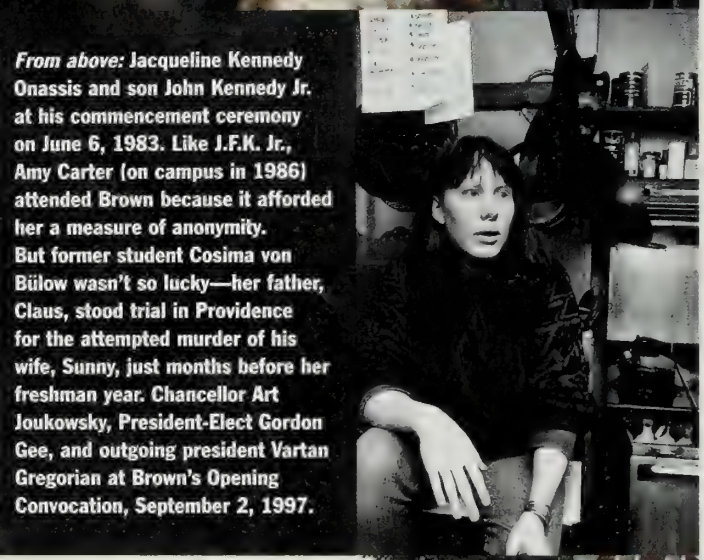


Viewed from above, where BMWs and Harleys aren't visible, Brown's central campus looks positively staid.



The low fares at the campus travel agency show just how competitive the Brown market has become. Weekend flights to Paris are not unheard of; shopping trips to Manhattan have become routine.





From above: **Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and son John Kennedy Jr. at his commencement ceremony on June 6, 1983. Like J.F.K. Jr., Amy Carter (on campus in 1986) attended Brown because it afforded her a measure of anonymity. But former student Cosima von Bülow wasn't so lucky—her father, Claus, stood trial in Providence for the attempted murder of his wife, Sunny, just months before her freshman year. Chancellor Art Joukowsky, President-Elect Gordon Gee, and outgoing president Vartan Gregorian at Brown's Opening Convocation, September 2, 1997.**





Brown seems to be selecting from a particularly rarefied pool.

Traditionally, the Ivy League—started as a regional athletic association—sought to attract the scions of blueblood families, scholars, and athletes. Founded in 1764, Brown soon became known as "that quiet, earnest institution up in Providence," according to one alum. It graduated John D. Rockefeller Jr., S. J. Perelman, and Ted Turner, who was expelled in 1960 for "fraternizing" with a woman in his dorm room. But for most of its history, Brown struggled to keep up with its bigger, wealthier rivals: Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. By the 1970s, with its puny endowment, apathetic alumni, and controversial New Curriculum—which eliminated nearly all required courses and introduced a decidedly relaxed grading system—it was regarded as a lesser academic institution: the "back door" to the Ivies.

That's all changed. Over the last decade, Brown has become one of the most desirable colleges in the country; it's the destination of choice for privileged youth from old money, new money, and European royalty—a celebrity mecca that vies with Aspen and St. Barts for its quotient of beautiful young things. While most Ivy League schools have a sprinkling of famous faces at graduation, Brown's commencement ceremonies

"So your dad was president and your family is on the Forbes Four Hundred list," says Brown's Steve Oliveira. "That's nice—get in line."

seem like old home week for aging 60s icons. When Jane Fonda arrived to watch her stepdaughter, Nathalie Vadim (her father is director Roger Vadim), march through the Van Wickle Gates, she spent most of the preliminaries catching up with Carly Simon, who was there to see her daughter, Sarah Taylor, whom she had during her marriage to James Taylor. (Fonda's daughter, Vanessa Vadim, also went to Brown.)

The school has been home to the children of three famous designers: Calvin Klein's daughter, Marci; Ralph Lauren's son Andrew; and Carolina Herrera's daughter Patricia. Two Beatles' children also attended Brown—Ringo's stepdaughter, Francesca Gregorini, famous for speeding around campus on a black Harley while wearing a leopard-print mini, and George Harrison's son, Dhani. Itzhak Perlman's daughters Leora and Navah are recent graduates. And then there is the constant wave of Hollywood children, including Marlon Brando's daughter Petra; Max von Sydow's son Henrik; Louis Malle's son, Cuote; and Kate Capshaw's daughter Jessica, who is now a senior.

The school has also drawn assorted royalty, including King Hussein's son Prince Feisal, whose Jordan address was listed in the student directory as "Royal Palace, Amman," and Princess Alexandra, who was listed alphabetically—under *G* for Greece. It also attracts the children of Wall Street magnates, from Saul Steinberg's son Julian to two of Henry Kravis's children, Robert and Harrison. (In 1992, Kravis endowed a $2 million chair in the memory of Harrison, who died in an automobile accident after his freshman year.) And Fiat heir Giovanni Agnelli, who died of cancer in December, was also a Brown graduate. Because of its proximity to Newport, Brown is a magnet for Rhode Island society and retired European CONTINUED ON PAGE 63


ESCADA
MARGARETHA LEY




CADA
RETHA LEY
SO · MANHASSET · BOSTON · PALM BEACH
HARBOUR · SAN FRANCISCO · PHOENIX · LAS VEGAS
MAN MARCUS AND SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

Letter from BROWN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 58

aristocrats, most notably Cosima von Bülow, whose father, Claus von Bülow, was tried for the attempted murder of his wife, Sunny, in Providence.

Today, Brown is perhaps best known as the alma mater of John Kennedy Jr., who is the most famous in a long line of political progeny: Bill Mondale, the son of the 1984 presidential candidate; Laura and Donna Zaccaro, daughters of Mondale's running mate, Geraldine Ferraro; and Kara Dukakis, daughter of the 1988 presidential candidate. Three of Robert F. Kennedy's children—Kerry, Rory, and Doug—attended Brown. So did Amy Carter. But despite its liberal stripe, Brown has lured the children of two recent Republican presidential candidates: Roberta Forbes, daughter of Steve Forbes, and Kathryn Alexander, daughter of Lamar Alexander.

"People like John [Kennedy] come here because they can maintain a certain level of anonymity," says Steve Oliveira, Brown's acting director of development. "They are treated like everyone else. That is so refreshing. That's the beauty of the place—it is egalitarian. So your dad was president. Your family is on the Forbes Four Hundred list and they're billionaires. That's nice—get in line."

Much of the credit for Brown's ascendancy is due to outgoing president Vartan Gregorian, a born showman and fund-raiser who left last summer to run the Carnegie Corporation. Known around campus as "Gregarious Gregorian," the goateed, Plato-quoting Armenian more than doubled Brown's endowment—to more than $800 million—during his eight years in Providence. In each of the last two years the university received more than 15,000 applications—the most in its history. It accepts students from the top 2 percent of the pool.

In the 1980s, Gregorian revitalized the beleaguered New York Public Library by raising millions of dollars from rich patrons such as Brooke Astor, former Time Inc. chairman Andrew Heiskell, and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, as well as Wall Street figures, foundations, and corporations.

With Brown's annual tuition and expenses now surpassing $29,000, Gregorian implemented the same fund-raising techniques in Providence, where he was faced with physical and financial disrepair, and soaring costs that were eating away at the university's endowment—the smallest in the Ivy League. In return, more than one wealthy patron has asked for a little favor. At Brown, one of the few schools in the Ivy League that do not have completely need-blind admissions, the president can reserve a few places for V.I.P.'s.

"My approach to Brown was very simple," Gregorian says. "Excellence has a price tag. You have to pay for that. You have to invest in Brown's future." But it is impossible to see such an extraordinary number of affluent students flock to Providence without wondering how they all earned a place at the university, and if perhaps they are an integral part of Gregorian's strategy to keep Brown in the black. Patricia Herrera, who graduated in 1996, was floored by the row of sports cars parked on the street in front of the library. "It was Porsche, Porsche, BMW, Porsche, BMW, Ferrari, Porsche," she recalls. "I thought, What's going on here?"

Gregorian dismisses the notion that Brown has a disproportionate number of celebrity students. "It has certainly not been by design by me," he says, adding that he has turned away many children of wealthy and powerful parents. "But there is a bias toward the rich that their children must be dumb. Sometimes you can be the son or daughter of a rich person, and you can be privileged to have the best education, and you have also taken advantage of it."

"I've always wondered how much it costs to get into Brown," says Meryl Blackman, an independent education adviser with M&M Educational Advisors. "My impression is under the Gregorian years a number of kids were taken because parents either promised—or would be expected—to make a sizable contribution to the school. That's how one raises the endowment. It was a smart move."

There's no sign that Brown's trendiness will dissipate anytime soon; indeed, the school gets more popular every year. "They have 15 years of graduates who have gravitated toward high-profile, glamorous professions in the media, publishing, show business, and music," says *Newsweek* education editor Barbara Kantrowitz, who also edits the *Kaplan/Newsweek How to Get Into College* guide. "There is this network out there, and this incredible word of mouth."

Naturally, students will tell you they were drawn to the school less by its fabulous alumni than by its flexible curriculum. Rhode Island was founded in 1636 as a haven from political and religious persecution; Brown, which sits atop a hill that overlooks Providence, has become the pre-eminent school for those seeking a freer educational environment. Brown's New Curriculum lends the university a certain radical chic as a school that's responsive to the demands of students—the hip Ivy.

"There were desperate Americans who would affect French and Italian accents," says one alum. "It got to be like the cast of *Upstairs, Downstairs.*"

The rebel spirit dates back to 1968, when students Elliot Maxwell and Ira Magaziner—President Clinton's former point man on health-care reform—wrote a 400-page critique of the core curriculum, arguing that studying the great works of Western civilization advocated "a particular culture." The Brown administration agreed, thus laying the groundwork for "multiculturalism" 20 years before most other colleges caught on.

Brown students no longer have to deal with tedious core courses such as mathematics and languages; the curriculum allows students to create their own interdisciplinary concentrations (the connection between modern art and dance, for example) instead of traditional majors. It also allows experimentation without fear of failure. Students take courses either "ABC/no credit," in which C is the lowest mark that can be recorded on the transcript, or "satisfactory/no credit," a pass-fail system with a bonus: failing grades are expunged from the record. (The latter is known as taking a course for a "snack," and a popular T-shirt on campus bears the slogan "Take Life S/NC.") Not surprisingly, the curriculum is a hit with students—so much so that in 1993 the *Washington Monthly* reported that Ivy-bound high-school seniors called Brown "the four-year vacation school."

Which was precisely what Esmond Harmsworth was looking for. The son of British newspaper baron Lord Rothermere and Mary Murchison of the Texas oil family, he grew up in London, New York, Palm Beach, and Newport. He could

She curled up in her favorite spot on the couch.
As the room darkened,

she felt herself being carried off

into another world
as the credits began to roll.

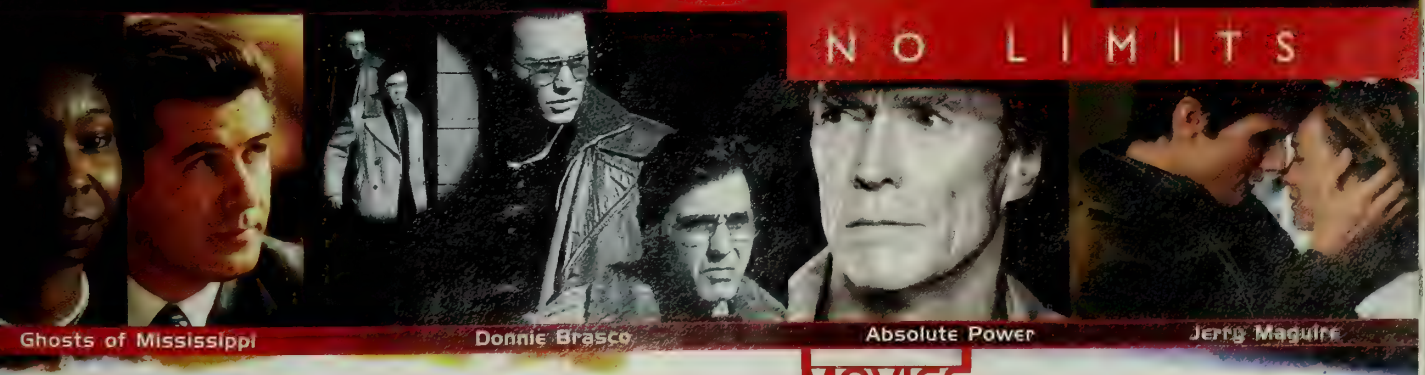
Sometimes being somewhe



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MOVIES



Rufus Griscom, a 1991 alum, founded *Nerve*, a popular on-line magazine featuring "literary erotica."



Tatiana von Fürstenberg, '91, daughter of Diane von Fürstenberg, is at work on a novel; Francesca Gregorini, '90, stepdaughter of Ringo Starr, is a singer-songwriter.



The John Carter Brown Library, built over an 1815 granary, is where scholars who descend on the book collection [illegible]

have gone to college anywhere. But after five years at Eton, the rigid British prep school, Brown sounded like fun. "There were all these people from all over the world," Harmsworth recalls, noting that foreign students were called "Euros" even if they weren't European. "Lots of people came into the dining hall in ascots or would drive up and down campus in expensive convertibles all day long. People got more English than the English. There were desperate Americans who would affect French and Italian accents. After a while, it got to be like the cast of *Upstairs, Downstairs.*"

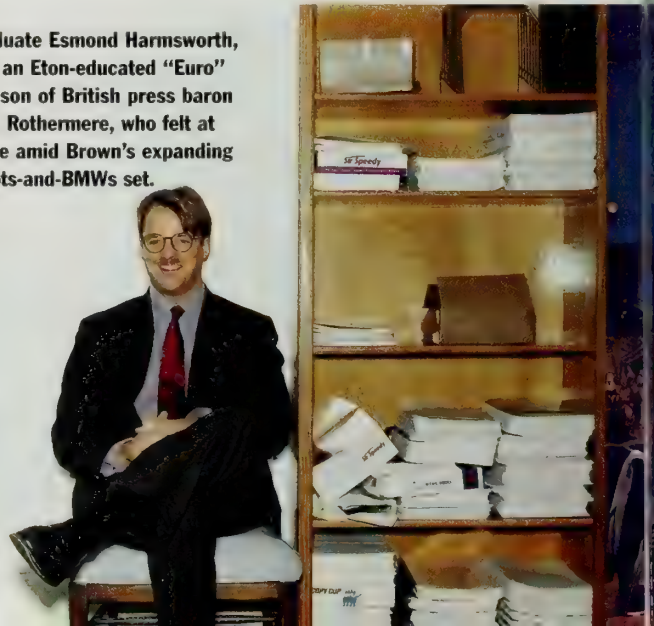
For both Euros and rich American students, perhaps the best part of campus life is that it's off-campus, where those with enough money live in private houses and apartments. Many students move into Center Place, an apartment complex which features a swimming pool, a gym, and private parking—for $1,700 a month. "The last thing you want to do is sit in a dorm room after 10 years of boarding school," says Hugh Warrender, another Etonian, who graduated in 1990.

When Vartan Gregorian took over, in 1989, the university began recruiting at prestigious boarding schools in Europe, Greece, Hong Kong, Japan, and Kathmandu. Arabella Ferrari and Arietta Livanos came to Brown from the posh Aiglon school in Switzerland. "Whether they were looking for rich international students to aid their endowment or looking for richness in diversity, I don't know," says Carlos Mejia, an Etonian who was in the class of 1990 and now works for a Latin-American venture-capital fund. "But some effort was made to go after wealthy individuals. Look who's there—the sons and daughters of so-and-so. Especially the Swiss schools, which are not known for children who are especially bright as much as socially connected."

"Sometimes it seemed like there weren't that many normal Americans," says Lisa McFadden, class of '93, the daughter of George McFadden and socialite Topsy Taylor (and the niece of designer Mary McFadden). "There was the grunge group, which were the sort of mellow Doc Martens types; the 'semios,' cerebral semiotics and philosophy majors; the theater crowd; and the preppy/jock crowd. Then there was the whole Euro scene."

For New Yorkers such as McFadden and her friend Serena Boardman, Brown offered a welcome alternative to other New England campuses, with their L. L. Bean boots and Fair Isle sweaters. At Brown, you'll see plenty of tweed blazers,

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONATHAN BECKER (LIBRARY); SEAN KARL COLLEGE GREEN;



Graduate Esmond Harmsworth, '90, an Eton-educated "Euro" and son of British press baron Lord Rothermere, who felt at home amid Brown's expanding ascots-and-BMWs set.

Chanel jackets, clove cigarettes, even the occasional Hermès bag sitting on a lunch tray next to the beef Stroganoff. "It really broadened my cultural background," says McFadden, who plans to join her boyfriend in Athens, where she already has a half-dozen close friends from college.

"There was certainly more double-cheek kissing going on at Brown than at any other Ivy League school," says Jim Brodsky, who graduated in 1990 and now works in the fashion industry. "You'd be sitting on the Blue Room steps, overlooking the main green in the springtime when everyone's suntanning, and you'd see someone in bare feet wearing a little ankle bracelet and kicking a Hacky Sack next to someone in a Versace shirt and stiletto sandals, next to someone in jeans and a black motorcycle jacket. And there was always a protest going on about a cause no one cares about. It was wonderful."

Everyone generally mixes easily together, except during the elaborate lunchtime social scene at the Sharpe Refectory, nicknamed "the Ratty." "You can tell someone's clique by where they sat in the Ratty," Brodsky says. "It's very like Mortimer's." The Euros, who tend to bond with the affluent New York private-school crowd, keep to themselves in the dark smoking section known as "the cave." And they wouldn't be caught dead in the dining hall at any other time of day. "I don't know anyone who ate dinner on campus after sophomore year," says Alison Appel, a 1992 graduate who now works in motion-picture development for Disney. Instead, students ferret out the dozens of superb Italian restaurants and pizza parlors in Providence, as well as Chinese and Indonesian joints which don't have liquor licenses. "We'd stop at a seedy liquor store on the way," says Appel.

Brodsky concedes that there was a lot of excess at Brown during the 1980s. "People did not deprive themselves just because they were in college," he says, describing elaborate stereo systems, expensive sports cars, exquisitely furnished student houses, and excursions to New York's Frédéric Fekkai for haircuts. He recalls one friend who, taking a weekend trip to Paris, treated a classmate to a round-trip ticket on the Concorde and three nights at the Meurice.

The excess has continued unabated. Brown students whose mothers are New York interior decorators have been known to enliven Brown's infamously shabby dorm rooms with custom paint jobs, curtains, and Oriental rugs. One freshman had his desk and shelves refinished because he

"There was always a protest going on about a cause no one cares about," says 1990 alum Jim Brodsky.



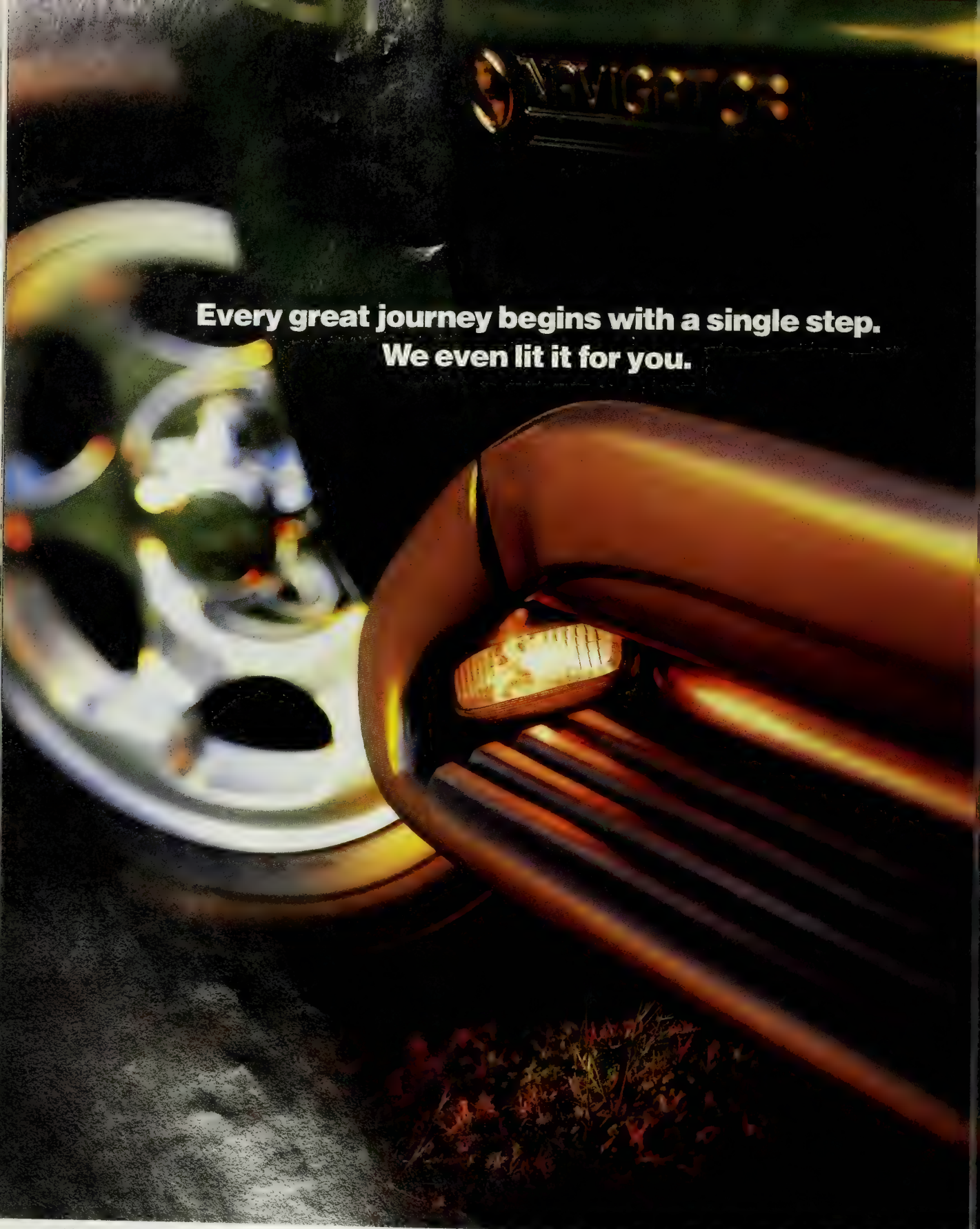
Classes are occasionally held on the College Green, particularly if there's tanning potential.



A seminar in the Annmary Brown Memorial, which is named for the granddaughter of Nicholas Brown, the benefactor after whom the school is named.



Doug Liman, '88, the director of *Swingers* and the son of the late New York lawyer Arthur Liman, says Brown sparked his creative and "spiritual awakening."



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found them too dreary. A student painted his room an eggshell shade because he didn't like white-white. And since students are not allowed to alter their dorm rooms, transgressors routinely pay to have the rooms repainted at the end of the school year.

The party ritual at Brown tends to begin earlier in the week and get much wilder than at most Ivy League colleges. The action often starts on Wednesday nights, when groups of students pile into cars and head for Club Nicole in Boston. "You'd party from 11 to 2 and be back by 2:40, 3 at the latest," says McFadden. "If you had an 11-o'clock class the next day, you'd be fine." Thursday is Funk Night, a college-wide dance party sponsored by the Underground, the campus bar. Since it is illegal to serve alcohol in Rhode Island after one A.M., students often break up into "after-parties" at off-campus houses; the parties last well into Friday morning, or, as Brodsky recalls, "until the police come to turn down the music."

On Friday and Saturday nights, there are the usual fraternity parties and keggers. Off-campus, the Euros often host dinner parties or rent out neighborhood restaurants for the night and throw wild bashes with mixed drinks and live bands. Students occasionally book houses in Newport or on Block Island and throw weekend-long parties. Alex von Fürstenberg and a group of friends once rented a warehouse in downtown Providence and turned it into a nightclub with a D.J. and a full bar. "They invited 400 people," says a student. "It went on until three or four in the morning. People who were too trashed to make it back up the hill stayed at the Biltmore for the night."

There are also infamous annual parties such as the Naked Party, which is exactly what it purports to be, and Campus Dance, in which alumni return for yet another bacchanalian night. In 1993, John Kennedy Jr. showed up with Daryl Hannah. "One spring weekend, a group of guys took over a house. On Friday, they put out a bowl filled with ecstasy; on Saturday night, they put out a bowl filled with mushrooms," recalls a 1996 graduate. "People partied until five in the morning and then everybody went for breakfast at Ruby's [a local diner], and then some of the boys went for 'legs and eggs'"—a reference to a local strip club called the Foxy Lady, which gained a measure of infamy in 1994, when Brown student Heidi Mattson revealed in a book, *Ivy League Stripper,* that she had funded her undergraduate education by table-dancing.

"Brown gives you enough rope to hang yourself," says Jonathan Groff, who was in John Kennedy's class, and who is now the head writer for *Late Night with Conan O'Brien.* "It's not for everybody. It's an ideal place for a certain type of student—someone who is very self-directed. If you're

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TIM SHEARFER



—EVGENIA PERETZ



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not that kind of person, you can waste a lot of time there."

The notorious stories are true—stories about Brown students who take every course pass-fail, as the lead singer for the Debutantes reportedly did one year, and Euros who spend most of their time driving BMWs, a popular campus pastime. But these students are not the norm. By all accounts, the caliber of Brown's students has risen consistently.

"There are really two Browns," says one alum. "There is the Brown full of smart, serious students, and then there is this whole parallel universe of Beautiful People who live in a world of great apartments, great parties, and buzz around campus all day on Vespas. They all major in art history, take photography classes at RISD [the Rhode Island School of Design], and walk around carrying portfolios, trying to look cool."

"It's definitely about a certain kind of extroversion," says Rufus Griscom, who is trying to explain why such a disproportionate number of Brown graduates have veered toward high-profile fields, from music and entertainment to the Internet. Together with his girlfriend, Genevieve Field, Griscom recently started an on-line magazine called *Nerve* (www.nervemag.com), which features pictures of naked women and erotica by writers such as Pulitzer Prize–winner Robert Olen Butler, Naomi Wolf, and Joycelyn Elders, who wrote a piece on masturbation. It has become one of the hottest on-line magazines, and there's talk of a print version and a book. Last fall *Time* called the partners "the cyber Ryan O'Neal and Ali MacGraw."

Griscom, 30, believes the loose eclecticism of the college attracts students with an entrepreneurial spirit. Because of the forgiving grading system, he says, Brown breeds the notion that students should not be afraid to fail or try new things. Witness Griscom's senior thesis, on pornographic photography in the mid– to late 19th century and the scandal surrounding Manet's *Olympia*.

"There is the Brown full of smart, serious students," says an alum. "Then there are the Beautiful People who buzz around campus all day on Vespas."

"There was definitely an anti-Establishment sentiment," says Griscom, whose brother and sister also attended Brown, and whose uncle was married to socialite Nina Griscom. "At the other schools I visited, people were book-smart and educated, but more subdued and weaned."

Doug Liman, the 31-year-old director of the cult film *Swingers*, credits Brown for his creative and "spiritual awakening." "I learned so much there," says Liman, the son of the late New York lawyer Arthur Liman. "I feel like my life started freshman year. I'm not talking about just my career, I'm talking about me as a person. Who I am. Not to knock the faculty, but most of what I learned, I learned from my fellow students."

While still at Brown, Liman started a college cable-television station and secured a $300,000 grant from the CBS Foundation to found the National Association of College Broadcasters. In 1989, Liman invited Ted Turner to address the station's annual conference, and Turner accepted. It was the first time he'd returned to Brown since he'd been tossed out in 1960. In 1989, Turner received an honorary degree in place of his bachelor's degree [illegible] announced a $25 million gift to the university.

Liman says that all of his [illegible]ble-TV station have gone on to top [illegible] Brown Bartis is now senior vice president of [illegible]

dios, Elysa Koplovitz is head of development at MTV Films, and Maggie Malina is vice president of production at Pacific Western Productions. "All of my friends are charting their own routes," he says. "I'm sure all of their parents, like mine, were really upset that we weren't following a standard route. That is, until I became a success. My father went to Harvard. He didn't go to Brown, so he didn't understand we'd been liberated from doing things conventionally."

"I think it's that when you are around great people it makes you better," says actress Laura Linney (*Primal Fear*), a theater-arts major who graduated in 1986. "I was always overwhelmed by my classmates and how creative they were." In Hollywood, she bumps into close friends all the time and proudly runs down a list of Brown alums, including actress Julie Warner, production designer Mark Friedberg (*The Ice Storm*), screenwriter Chris Brancato (*Hoodlum*), and actor-playwright Tim Blake Nelson, who will appear in Terrence Malick's *The Thin Red Line*. "People talk about the Brown mafia," she says, "but it's really true in terms of keeping in touch and being supportive."

Nowhere is the Brown network more apparent than in the music industry, which is virtually overrun with alumni from WBRU, the Brown radio station—a full-fledged, 50,000-watt commercial operation run by students. "It was a very unusual opportunity because we got real-life experience in the business," says Patti Galluzzi, senior vice president of music and talent at MTV, who planned to go to medical school and worked at the radio station just for fun. But at the end of her senior year she was offered the job of program director, and she stayed on at the station another year. That job led her to MTV.

Galluzzi's office at MTV looks like a CD library, with all sorts of gimmicky concert promotionals cluttering the shelves. There's a lava lamp by her desk, a couple of surfboards leaning against the wall, and a Nirvana banner hanging from the ceiling. Suspended above her head is a gray zeppelin advertising the band Led Zeppelin. Galluzzi hired Stephen Hill, a close friend from Brown, to be MTV's director of music programming.

Alison Stewart, a former MTV news reporter, got her first break from George Bradt, a segment producer at the network and a Brown alum, who told her about the opening. "The Brown music connection is like the Harvard comedy connection," says Stewart, now a correspondent on the CBS newsmagazine *Public Eye with Bryant Gumbel*. "It's the brain trust." Stewart recently wrote an article for *Swing* magazine on "the Brown Music Mafia," listing more than 25 alumni in the business, including Atlantic Records executive Craig Kallman, singer Mary Chapin Carpenter, and Lisa Loeb, whose earnest single "Stay" went to No. 1 in 1994.

"It was so exciting getting to school that first week and realizing you have so much in common with so many people," recalls Loeb, who was torn between Brown and Harvard. "So I went for a second interview and I was talking to the guy from Harvard. I told him I wanted to go someplace academically challenging, and I wanted to have fun. And he said, 'It sounds like you should go to Brown.'" □


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MOUNT SINAI'S DEADLY TREASURE

Deep in the Saudi desert, two American explorers unlocked a mystery as ancient as the Bible when they discovered what they believe is the real Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments and the Israelites left their gold. The Saudis deny it. Today, the fenced and guarded mountain known as Jabal al Lawz contains 60,000 pounds of advanced military technology with the potential to help attack Israel

BY HOWARD BLUM



FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN
Above: **the view from Jabal al Lawz—photographed by Larry Williams in 1988—shows what appear to be charred rocks. Adventurers Bob Cornuke and Williams believe that here, according to the Bible, the earth was scorched by fire from the sky.** ***Inset:*** **Cornuke, left, and Williams, November 1997.**

For centuries, scholars have searched for the location of Mount Sinai. The traditional site in the Sinai Peninsula has, it is agreed, neither religious nor archaeological validity. In fact, many eminent biblical authorities, such as Dr. Frank Moore Cross, the retired Hancock Professor of Hebrew and Other Oriental Languages at Harvard, and Dr. P. Kyle McCarter Jr., the William Foxwell Albright [illegible] Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern [illegible] ies at Johns Hopkins, believe M[illegible] is in northwestern Saudi Arabia. The [illegible] dom of Saudi Arabia, however, has routinely refused entry to foreign archaeologists.

This month Simon & Schuster will publish The Gold of Exodus, *a book based on the firsthand accounts of two adventurers who sneaked into Saudi Arabia in search of the real Mount Sinai. What they believe they have found is [illegible] become an international topic of [illegible] nd debate—a controversy that [illegible] olved until the kingdom al[illegible] to examine the mountain in [illegible] n Saudi Arabia known as Ja[illegible]*

It was chance, and a fair amount of greed, that took Dave Fasold and his Simpson Frequency Generator, Model 420-D, to Saudi Arabia.

In April 1986, Fasold had just finished trekking through the tiny Turkish town of Dŏgubayazit as part of an archaeological expedition organized to search for the remains of Noah's Ark. Fasold had been recruited because of his ability to coax results from his metal-finding machine—he had learned to play the generator like a virtuoso. If buried metal lay near the spot where Fasold pointed the rods of his sensing device, he could detect it. And,

Excerpted from *The Gold of Exodus. The Discovery of the True Mount Sinai*, by Howard Blum, to be published in Febru[illegible] by Simon & Schuster; © 1998 by the autho[illegible]

INSET STYLED BY KITTIE BREWSTER
FOR DETAILS, SEE CREDITS PAGE



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after consulting the precise frequency readings generated, he could determine conclusively if the hidden material was tin, aluminum, lead, or even silver or gold.

Yet after his month in Turkey, Fasold—then a 42-year-old Floridian who financed his travels with a deep-sea salvage business—thought his travels were over. That is, until Ron Wyatt, a devout Christian from Nashville, Tennessee, who led the ark expedition, made him a proposition. Wyatt told Fasold of treasure buried in the plain surrounding a mountain in Saudi Arabia. With your machine guiding us, he promised, it will be easy pickings. Wyatt had even worked out a contract specifying how anything discovered would be split.

Fasold couldn't help feeling he was being set up. But he couldn't walk away from a free trip to Saudi Arabia, a country he had never seen. He didn't really buy the whole buried-treasure business, but eventually signed just below the line where Wyatt and his partner had already conveniently typed in his name.

Check your Bible, Wyatt ordered. It will tell you that Mount Sinai is located in the ancient land of Midian. And Midian is in Saudi Arabia.

Not until dinner on the third evening in Saudi Arabia did Fasold learn what had happened the last time Wyatt had journeyed to the kingdom. Accompanied by his two sons, Wyatt had walked across the Jordanian border into Saudi Arabia without a visa. No one would notice, he had figured, or—worst case—he'd get a slap on the wrist. He was wrong. After spending 78 days in a Saudi jail, Wyatt had finally been released.

That scared Fasold. Nothing that was out there was worth 78 days—or maybe longer—in a dark Saudi hellhole.

"I'm not going," he finally announced.

So Wyatt told him the rest of the story. Tomorrow we're going to nothing less, Fasold recalls Wyatt explaining, than the holiest site on earth. It's the *real* Mount Sinai: the mountain upon w[illegible], according to the Bible, God des[illegible] and gave Moses the Ten Commandments. A lot of p[illegible] tain is on the Sina[illegible] but that idea is bas[illegible]

Check your Bible, Wyatt ordered. It will tell you that Mount Sinai is located in the ancient land of Midian, now part of Saudi Arabia. The Bedouin, according to Wyatt, have known the true location of Moses's mountain for centuries. It is, they believe, the mountain known as Jabal al Lawz.

But there was even more at stake than finding this ostensibly holy ground. Wyatt told Fasold that when their group arrived at Mount Sinai he wanted his new colleague to use his machine to help unearth a treasure. And not just a small one. Wyatt—a man who had devoted a large part of his life to studying the Bible—was determined to recover the wealth of Egypt. This consisted of gold and precious gems which the Bible said the Israelites had taken with them when Moses led them out of Egypt after the 10th plague. This event has been historically verified. The ancient treasure was left, according to both tradition and biblical interpretation, at the foot of Mount Sinai as penance for building the false idol of the golden calf. This treasure was the gold of the Exodus.

That night, his head resting on a camel saddle, Fasold had trouble sleeping. His eyes looked heavenward, and followed the gentle swaying of the brass-studded, red-lacquered tent poles in the desert breeze. He began to rethink his predicament. He had come this far. What if there was treasure? What if he could walk on Moses's mountain? Could it all be true?

The rumor spread that police were coming for them at dawn. Fasold remembers thinking, when he heard their cars, that morning is the time when executioners traditionally make their appearance. Just the day before, Wyatt's group had traveled to the flat, rocky plain that spreads out from the black-peaked mountain of Jabal al Lawz. He had set up his frequency generator [illegible]t 50 feet from a wadi, one of the [illegible]ver beds that scar the land in the [illegible]e East. It took some effort to shove the probes into the rocky ground, which he sprinkled with water from his canteen. He began playing with the machine, adjusting his range and frequency controls. Almost immediately a dozen signal lines had spread out from the device like spokes from a wheel. He was still methodically tracing the lines hours later when they decided to camp for the night. And now it was dawn, and the police were apparently on their way.

The Saudi officials arrived and, after hours of interrogation, agreed to accompany Wyatt's group back to the mountain. Under their direction, Fasold, Wyatt, and the other men began digging in the wadi, the very spot that Fasold had staked out.

It didn't take long for the discovery to occur.

Everyone stopped moving when a man digging let loose with a piercing, triumphant yell. Fasold watched, with an amazement he says he will never forget, as the digger held up a glittering bracelet, which he had apparently unearthed, high above his head.

The next thing Fasold knew, the Saudis were ordering him back to the car. When he protested, he was told, "A major discovery has been made. You are under arrest."

The trial took place before the sharif of Tabuk, in that northwestern Saudi Arabian city. On its ninth day the sharif—whom Fasold recalls as grim and unforgiving—announced the verdict. All photographs taken at the site were to be confiscated. All notes, diaries, and letters in the men's possession were now the property of Saudi Arabia. The explorers were forbidden to publish or even talk about their findings. If they returned to Saudi Arabia, they would be executed. They were instructed to leave immediately for Jedda and the flight to Istanbul.

Fasold agreed to the terms. But on the return flight he stayed busy, drawing a map while his memory was still fresh. His sketch attempted to re-create the precise route to Jabal al Lawz and the location of the site.

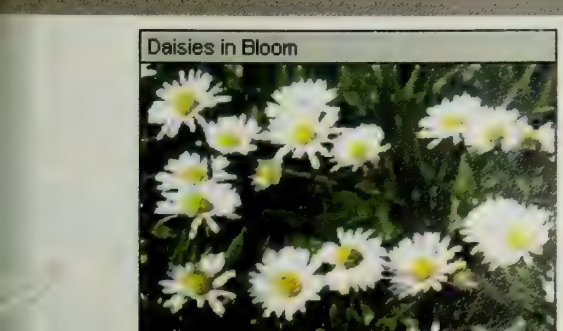
For there was still one secret about the mountain which Fasold had not shared with anyone. His frequency generator had shown that the plains surrounding Jabal al Lawz were loaded with buried gold. And even if he couldn't risk returning, he was sure he knew a man who would.

But—a fact certainly unknown to Fasold—he was not the only one who was working on a secret map of the desert northeast of Tabuk. A military map was being drawn at the orders of the Saudi



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HALLOWED GROUND Top: based on information from Williams and Cornuke, this map shows a revised path of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt after the 10th plague. Above: the scorched peak of Jabal al Lawz is visible here.

MAP ART BY ANITA KARL AND JAMES KEMP. MAP COLORIZATION BY JOHN DIXON. PHOTOGRAPH BY [illegible]

Higher Officers' Committee, the kingdom's military command. According to a U.S. Air Force officer involved in the project, this document included a site that was marked N-4. And this also referred to Jabal al Lawz.

Larry Williams was glad to be home. It was early October 1987, and he had just spent five days trespassing on New Mexico [illegible] Indian reservation. Most of that time he has been passed sifting through [illegible] a hole nearly 25 feet deep, [illegible]

relics. Just as he had uncovered what may have been an old cross, the police from the reservation had arrived and he had been forced to run for it. So now, after a short plane ride, he was back home in Solana Beach, California.

His silver-blue Rolls-Royce Corniche had been waiting in the parking lot of the San Diego airport, and as soon as he got behind the wheel he put the top down. He drove the big car up into the green hills past the city. The wooden cross rested on the cowhide seat next to him. His house was new, sprawling, and—with its red tile roof—vaguely Spanish. The view from its wide windows extended past the pool and over the shaved lawns toward the Pacific.

Finally home, he was about to disappear into the shower when he noticed the stack of mail his wife had piled carefully on a table. He skimmed through it until, near the bottom, he came to a handwritten envelope. The return address said it had been sent by Dave Fasold. It took Williams an instant to remember that Fasold was the guy who was trying to get him to invest in a documentary about the search for Noah's Ark.

Williams opened the envelope and pulled out two pages of lined spiral-notebook paper. Each sheet, front and back, was completely filled, the words running across the page in a tight, confident script. He read Fasold's first sentence. Williams says he will never forget that opening line: "Larry, I have an unbelievable story to tell you."

Williams remembers that by the time he reached the end of the letter, he believed that now he had heard everything.

The real Mount Sinai? The gold of Exodus?

Yet despite his questions, Williams took an atlas from the bookshelf and hunted for a map of the Middle East. When he found it, he looked down the length of the Sinai Peninsula until his eyes settled on a black dot the size of a pinhead. Above it were the words "Mount Sinai." And directly below those words, he saw a tiny, but unmistakable, question mark.

He realized it was true. No one knew where Mount Sinai was located.

From the moment Williams began to think seriously about Fasold's claims, the


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risks concerned him. But he was no stranger to chance. He had made a fortune trading in the volatile commodities market, and in the late 70s and early 80s he had entered the equally uncertain arena of politics. In 1978 and again in 1982, he had been Montana's Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate. Despite the efforts and endorsements of Bob Dole and Ronald Reagan, he had lost both times.

This trip would be even more of a gamble: there were enormous complications. Even if he made his way across the desert to the mountain, even if he managed to locate the exact spot where Fasold's generator had registered the gold, even if he succeeded in excavating whatever the Israelites had left, getting it out of Saudi Arabia would still be a challenge.

He would be risking his life. The letter reported that Ron Wyatt had spent 78 days in a Saudi jail. Fasold himself had been under house arrest for a week. Then there had been the trial—a Saudi trial, a Saudi court—and the judge's threat of capital punishment.

Larry Williams was not a man who expected to end his life in jail. As he worked out the first tentative steps of a plan, he grew convinced he needed a partner. He wanted someone he could count on, someone he could trust if his life depended on it. He remembered a story he had recently heard from Jim Irwin, the Apollo 15 astronaut, a man Williams was inclined to respect. Irwin had told Williams the anecdote as a way of introducing him to its protagonist, Bob Cornuke, a native Californian who had been a football star at Fresno State. After college he had joined the police force in Costa Mesa, where he became a legendary member of the SWAT team. Now he lived in Colorado. Irwin described how Cornuke had climbed down a mountain in a blizzard with an injured man strapped to his back. Although it had been one of his first climbs, he had saved the man's life.

Williams decided to call Cornuke that evening.

By the end of that one phone call, Cornuke had agreed to fly out to Williams's home. He would, at the least, explore the possibility of going to a mountain halfway around the world.

For two months [illegible] their guide, they [illegible] they would find if th[illegible] able to locate the re[illegible] This research was he[illegible] most encouraging bits of Williams felt, were three extra-biblical pieces of information.

First: archaeologists had found no evidence that the Sinai Peninsula was the scene of the Exodus. Second: the men came across an interview in the *Bible Review*, with Professor Frank Moore Cross—who until his retirement was the Hancock Professor of Hebrew and Other Oriental Languages at Harvard. Cross, one of the most eminent living authorities in biblical scholarship, told the interviewer that he would place Mount Sinai "in the northwestern corner of Saudi Arabia, ancient Midian." This was precisely where Fasold and Wyatt believed it was located. When asked which mountain might be Mount Sinai, Professor Cross had said he "really didn't know," but then, out of all the mountains in Saudi Arabia, he mentioned one possible candidate—Jabal al Lawz.

The other encouraging fact came from some ancillary research the men had done about King Tutankhamen. He had died in 1352 B.C., which some speculate was within 100 years of Moses's lifetime. When British archaeologist Howard Carter discovered King Tut's tomb, there was, apart from a trove of gems, an estimated 400 pounds of gold.

The way Williams and Cornuke figured it, approximately one million Israelites (they arrived at this number by using the biblical census of 600,000 males as a starting point) could have walked off into the desert with at least that much gold.

Cornuke and Williams considered the facts, and made up their minds. They would go to Saudi Arabia.

But another trip came first. If Mount Sinai was actually in Saudi Arabia, then, the men believed, the crossing of the Red Sea would have to have occurred at the Strait of Tiran. For days they scuba-dived deep into the strait looking for some sign of the Red Sea [illegible] But they found nothing.

[illegible] still remembers sitting on the deck of their dive boat in the middle of the strait and staring at the dark sea. He recalls imagining the water beneath him parting and forming high walls, and a million Israelites marching across in flight from the Egyptians. It seemed impossible, yet he had come to take it simply as history.

Williams and Cornuke describe how they made a discovery the next day. Cornuke was deep underwater, pulling what, to his disappointment, turned out to be a rusted anchor from the silt. In an attempt to avoid what he believes was a hammerhead shark, he drifted out farther into the water. Williams, sensing trouble, followed him down.

They tumbled slowly, before hitting bottom. For a moment Cornuke thought it was the ocean floor. But he quickly decided that that was impossible—they had not actually descended that far. Williams describes pulling himself to his feet. He says that the surface beneath him felt hard and stable, even in his flippers. He took a small step, then another, and another. In a moment, Cornuke was next to him. After some time they found themselves walking side by side across the shallow water in the Strait of Tiran, toward Saudi Arabia.

"What if they catch you doing something . . . like forgery?" Cornuke asked. "Oh, for that," the Arab speculated, "they cut off your head."

The Book of Exodus describes the crossing site as a stretch of dry ground in the midst of the Red Sea, a roadway that took the Israelites out of the desert and into the land of Midian.

And, as miraculous as it seemed, Williams and Cornuke believe that in the spring of 1988 they found this site. They claim they discovered the land bridge that the Israelites had crossed 3,400 years ago. It was there, just as the Bible had said it would be. Mount Sinai was out there, too. It was simply a matter of looking in the right place.

But Williams and Cornuke could not legally enter Saudi Arabia. The Saudis do not allow tourists or even archaeologists into the kingdom. The only foreigners permitted to visit, without detailed

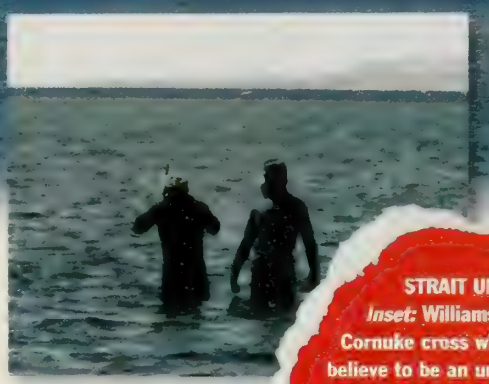
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Cornuke remembers staring at the dark sea and imagining the water beneath him parting and a million Israelites marching across in flight from the Egyptians.



STRAIT UP
Inset: **Williams and Cornuke cross what they believe to be an underwater land bridge referred to in the Bible.** ***Top:*** **a cargo ship stranded on the bridge, located beneath the Strait of Tiran in the Red Sea.**

application, are those invited by a citizen of the kingdom, those hired for legitimate work, or those making pilgrimages to the holy mosques. Williams and Cornuke had overestimated their chances of buying or negotiating their way into the country. After other options failed, they traveled to London to execute a plan devised by a colleague whom Larry Williams had asked for advice—a London commodities trader.

The plan, as they recount it, involved using a fax actually sent by a Saudi prince to the commodities trader.

Williams and Cornuke describe creating "royal" stationery, and then crafting a letter, complete with the prince's counterfeit signature, requesting travel visas for each of them. Then, after working out the difference in the time zones, they reprogrammed the trader's fax machine so that it would automatically print a sender ID line on the top of each transmission identical to the one that had come from the palace.

[illegible] They faxed the [illegible] a dis-

the Royal Consulate of Saudi Arabia thought that it had received a genuine transmission from the royal palace in Riyadh. The next day, when Williams called, an official told him with great politeness that if he and Mr. Cornuke would be so kind as to come by with their passports at their earliest convenience, visas would be granted.

Two days later, on June 10, they were on a plane to Jedda, Saudi Arabia. Cornuke was sitting next to an Arab, who told him, "You steal something, they cut off your hand. That's why there's no crime in the kingdom."

Cornuke listened, and finally couldn't help asking, "So what if they catch you doing something else? I don't know, another crime, say, like forgery?"

"Oh, for that," the Arab speculated happily, "they cut off your head. Definitely the head."

Williams and Cornuke left Tabuk not long after dawn. It was now the last week in June. They drove off into the desert in their rented Datsun pickup when the day's new light was shining like a beacon across the packed gray sand. Cornuke was at the wheel, and he had his dog-eared Bible with its faded red leather cover in his lap. Williams, leaning forward in the passenger's seat, recalls struggling to keep a map of the kingdom spread across the dashboard.

Sometime shortly after lunch, just as Fasold had promised, they passed the single, squat pump of the Al Kan gas station. Exactly four kilometers down the road, by Fasold's count, was a turnoff. If they took that road, they should be on a fairly direct path to the mountain.

Except, despite an attentive and careful search, they could not find the turnoff. Finally, they decided simply to depart from the main road and head into the desert. They continued to drive for a while, the Datsun plowing with considerable effort through a thick, gray ocean of sand. The heat was an additional torture. But they went on, and soon realized that they were lost. As they were trying to turn, hoping to head back to the main road, the truck began to sink into the soft sand. In his frustration, Cornuke pressed on the gas. It was the worst possible strategy. Walls of sand collapsed around the wheels until the Datsun was buried up to its axles. They got out, but nothing they did seemed to help.

"Now what do we do?" Williams asked. Later, he would admit that, in his mind, he was already rationing the food. They had enough for three days, perhaps more if they weren't greedy. He realized, however, that water would be another problem entirely, and it would have to be dealt with a lot sooner.

They must have been alone in the

TOP BY LARRY WILLIAMS



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desert for nearly two hours, lost and anxious, when in the distance they saw two small trucks leading a train of camels. They yelled and waved their hands, and at last the trucks headed toward them. But both men knew that these Bedouin were not necessarily their salvation.

As things worked out, the Bedouin were quickly able to extricate the truck. And they were pleased with the reward of fresh oranges that the two men gave them. But when Williams decided to ask about Jabal al Lawz, the attitudes of the rescuers changed.

The lead Arab began to shake his head emphatically, admonishing Williams. But the ex-politician continued his campaign. "Jabal al Lawz," he repeated.

This time the Bedouin simply turned and walked very quickly toward his truck. Williams says he thought the man was scared.

Williams focused his energies on another in the group, bargaining with oranges and a pouch of dehydrated Stroganoff. The second Bedouin, despite the vociferous protests of his friends, agreed to take them to Jabal al Lawz. He led the way, and they followed in their blue Datsun. They drove across a flat piece of desert, approaching a small, brown hill. Just as the lead truck rounded the hill, it came to a stop.

Saudi Arabia is now spending about $266 million on a new archaeological museum. "It will surprise the world," promises one Saudi official.

The driver got out, and after Cornuke and Williams joined him, pointed beyond the place where they stood.

Williams raised his binoculars to his eyes and saw the mountain rising majestically up into the sky just as Fasold had described it. There were two sharp, dark peaks and a large, graceful tree growing between the twin summits. It looked, says Williams, like what he had imagined the mountain of God w[illegible]

Williams describes fe[illegible] and completely overwhe[illegible] and with great care [illegible] the binoculars, scanning th[illegible] mountain. He wante[illegible] then he saw something that terrified him: a chain-link fence approximately 15 feet high topped with barbed wire. And inside the fence, at the foot of the mountain, was a guardhouse that he feared was filled with soldiers.

They were stunned. The mountain of God had apparently been transformed into a military fortress. They camped that night, far away from the fence, while they struggled to come up with a plan. They needed to decide whether they should go back to Tabuk, or whether they should attempt to sneak past the guards and explore Jabal al Lawz.

In the morning, they were still uncertain. Cornuke finally announced an interim strategy. They would return to the area surrounding the mountain and, as he put it, "feel things out." He insisted there was still a great deal that could be discovered. The Bible was full of clues about what should be found near the mountain if Jabal al Lawz was Mount Sinai. "For the time being," he advised, "we forget about even approaching the fence. At the first rumble from the guardhouse, we're in our truck and we hightail it back to Tabuk."

So they set out to explore. They began by looking for the biblical battlefield of Rephidim—a plain big enough for two huge armies to have fought on from sunup to sundown. And near this field would also have to be, if the biblical story was accurate, a hill from which Moses could have observed the battle.

When they drove south from the mountain, just a short distance away, they found a level plain the size—Williams estimates—of nearly a dozen football fields placed end to end. To the east, he says, they spotted a brown camel's hump of a hill which, they believe, served as Moses's vantage.

The Bible says that Moses, in his exile from Egypt, had kept sheep at Mount Sinai. On the back side of the mountain, they found vegetation which seemed suitable for grazing. They say that the mountain faced a large and relatively verdant [illegible]lley. It would have made, they decided, a logical home for the Israelites who, according to the Book of Exodus, camped [illegible]inai for nearly 11 months.

[illegible] as they continued exploring, they [illegible]omething for which they were not prepared: another 15-foot fence topped by barbed wire. And on the fence was a blue-and-white sign in Arabic and English. The English warned: ARCHEOLOGICAL AREA. IT IS UNLAWFUL TO TRESPASS.

Behind the fence were two large, stacked boulders. The stone that formed their thick base, Williams estimated, was 10 feet long and perhaps twice as high. On top of it was a smaller rock with a flat, altarlike surface. Painted on the rocks were old but distinct drawings of cows—not sheep, not animals that were native to the desert, but cattle. They were drawn with large, graceful horns which Williams describes as similar to those on figures he had seen in Egyptian drawings in the course of his research. To him, they seemed the very image of the Apis bulls he had seen in books.

Williams and Cornuke both believed they had located the altar of the golden calf.

But they had not yet been to the mountain. Williams said that, like Moses, he realized he was being allowed to see the promised land, but he could not enter it. Unless he dared to cross the fence. That night the two friends decided they had come too far to give up. Besides, Williams argued, the fence around the mountain was there simply to protect an archaeological site. Fasold's trial must have alerted the Saudis to the true significance of Jabal al Lawz. But, he remembers insisting to Cornuke, they had not seen any soldiers out there. Perhaps there were just night watchmen protecting the ruins, he theorized. How hard would it be to sneak past them? he challenged.

"Let's do it," Cornuke announced. And Williams immediately agreed.

It was after midnight when they left their camp, but a huge moon lit up the desert. They went on foot, two men in black, and the unexpected light was a mixed blessing. They would be able to see where they were going, but it also made them more visible.

They made their way to the tall cliff where only two days earlier the Bedouin had shown them Jabal al Lawz for the first time. Then Williams, using night-vision binoculars purchased in London, spotted the sentry on the mountainside above the guardhouse. Illuminated in the lurid green light of the lenses was the telltale glow from what Williams thought was a cigarette. When he looked closer, he saw a Bedouin guard with a rifle slung over his shoulder, and a bandolier filled with bullets crisscrossing his chest. A model of disciplined attention, a *sol-*

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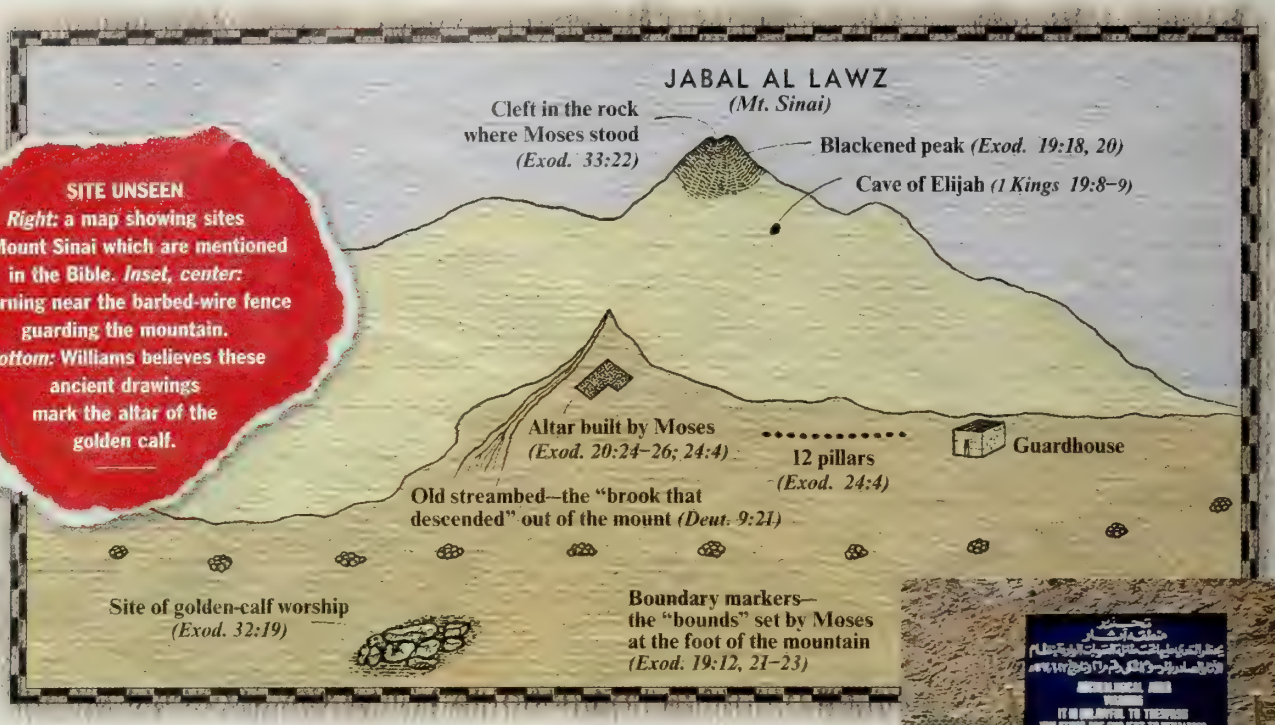
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SITE UNSEEN
Right: a map showing sites on Mount Sinai which are mentioned in the Bible. *Inset, center:* a warning near the barbed-wire fence guarding the mountain. *Bottom:* Williams believes these ancient drawings mark the altar of the golden calf.





dier, the Arab was staring out into the moonlit desert—watching.

They decided to circle east and enter the plain from the far side of the mountain, away from the guardhouse, and then make their way to the barrier.

Once they reached the fence, there was no need to climb over or to cut a hole. Cornuke found a place where the fence stretched across a soft, siltlike bed of sand. Using his knife, and then his hands, he dug a crawl space that was at least 10 inches deep. It was easy work. The sand there was the remains of an old, dried-up stream that had once run twisting down the mountain.

Williams believed it was the stream that the Bible says ran down Mount Sinai.

Cornuke grabbed the fence with both hands and pulled up, and Williams wriggled under it. Then it was Cornuke's turn. And suddenly both men were inside the compound, running to hide in the deep-blue shadows cast by the mountain.

From the fence, it was perhaps 50 yards to the base of the mountain. They say they were nearly halfway there when Williams went down. He fell headfirst, like a man diving into a pool, and Cornuke remembers that he thought a sniper had taken out his friend.

But when he ru[illegible] explained, "I must ha[illegible] he kicked at the pile o[illegible] fallen over. "Let's [illegible] go

They still had to find a route up the mountain. Three distinct paths seemed to branch off from its base. It would be a guess, and a completely arbitrary one, as to which led to the summit, or back to the guardhouse, or to a wandering patrol. Williams, whose luck had already earned him fortunes, made a choice, and Cornuke followed.

It was an easy climb for a while. They walked side by side, like hikers, and Cornuke had no trouble imagining Moses—a man of 80, the Bible said, when he took his last journey to the top of Sinai—making this trip.

But after the initial, almost effortless half-hour, things started to fall apart. The moonlight was the first to go. Only their infra-red binoculars made it possible to continue. A careless step and they could go straight over the edge.

As they climbed higher, the wind—always mercurial in the desert—started to moan. It slapped hard at their faces. They say they were only halfway up the mountain when their path revealed a high, craggy wall of solid rock.

So they backtracked and took a new path. They continued climbing, and that was when they heard the voices. Immediately they hit the dirt and lay in the darkness. They did not dare look up [illegible] who was out there. The voices, seemed to come from farther up the trail. Williams heard two men speaking in a soft, conversational Arabic. Then a third speaker broke in. He was more excited, even alarmed.

Cornuke drew his knife as the Arabs approached. He decided the first one who raised his rifle would be his target. Then, as the Americans waited, the soldiers' talk seemed to grow fainter.

When Williams and Cornuke finally got up, they realized they would have to find another route to the top to avoid the patrol. But when they searched, each new direction led to a dark wall of stone. They had no choice but to make their own new path up the mountainside.

Cornuke led the way. Directly below the men was a precipice that protruded from the side of the mountain like a lance, and it was a 30-foot drop.

But they persevered. It was a journey that could not have been longer than 15

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minutes, but in their minds it seemed like hours. Finally, Cornuke pulled himself over the crest of the mountain and then reached down to give his friend a strong, helping hand. In an instant, Williams was next to him. They were standing on the summit of Jabal al Lawz.

At that moment they felt they were standing on holy ground. This was the site, they believed, where Moses had received the Commandments. They were nearly 8,000 feet above the desert. They say that the air they breathed and the earth itself had a unique smell.

The mountain, they say, had two snub-nosed peaks. And between them lay a wide, rock-strewn plain sloping down from each summit. It was a natural amphitheater, and Williams and Cornuke are convinced that it was the stage on which the most momentous drama in the history of the world had been played out.

The ground they now walked on was a deep, unfamiliar black, as dark as obsidian. The rocks were like lumps of coal. The mountain, the Bible said, had been scorched by celestial fire. And it did appear scorched.

Cornuke saw, just beneath the pinnacle of the mountain, two huge rocks fused together in a V formation. The crevice between them was wide enough for a man to hide in. It was this spot, the men believe, where the Bible says God revealed himself to Moses.

The two men went to the edge of the mountaintop and sat down. Cornuke took up the binoculars, and when he looked out he felt as if he could see beyond the plain, across the desert, and all the way to the Red Sea. It was as if the entire Book of Exodus were spread out before him.

But Williams recalls that his musings took him in another direction. He was thinking, he says, about the gold of Exodus and what he would have to do to get it. In the course of this long night, he had already outsmarted the Saudis. He had sneaked through their fence, climbed their mountain, and dodged their patrols. And now he wanted at least a piece of the treasure that, he was certain, was buried at the base of the mountain.

Just before daybreak, they decided they should leave the mountain. Either they would go down while there was still some darkness, before whoever—watchmen? soldiers?—was in the guardhouse emerged for morning prayers and while their night-vision binoculars gave them a small edge. Or they would spend the day hidden, waiting for a new night, and a new chance to make their escape. They decided to go.

They made their way back to the trail and then continued down the side of the mountain. Crouching behind a rock, they peered toward the barbed-wire fence. The plain that stretched out in front of them was flat, without even a tree for cover.

"On three," Cornuke announced.

That was when Williams told him he was not leaving without at least trying to bring home a piece of the treasure. Williams had worked it all out. Fasold's crew had dug near some pillars he had spotted at the base of the mountain, and straight off they had found something that Fasold was convinced was a piece of gold jewelry. Williams's plan was to find the pillars, pray that they were not anywhere near the guardhouse, and then see what might be waiting beneath the dry earth.

On the mountain, two towers are being erected. They are solid-state radar systems, each weighing 30,000 pounds.

When he took off toward the tall rocks, Cornuke followed him. They had worked their way almost halfway across the base of the mountain when Williams came to a stop. Two huge rocks, each perhaps 60 feet long, had been wedged together. In the middle was a flat stone. He pointed it out to Cornuke, who knew at once what this had to be. They believed they had found the altar that, according to the Bible, Moses had erected next to the mountain. And nearby would most certainly be the 12 pillars the Bible said had been raised for each of the tribes of Israel.

Williams, scanning the plain with his binoculars, says he succeeded in locating what he believes are the 12 pillars. They were sticking out from the sand, all in a row, each one perhaps 18 feet in diameter and spaced about 5 feet apart. The pillars were perilously near the guardhouse, although, luckily, there was a long, deep wadi about the size of a city block that ran parallel to them.

Without pausing to say a word to Cornuke, Williams sprinted from the cover of the rocks. But all at once, as he was pounding across the sand, he came to an abrupt stop. Now that he was closer, he saw that what he had thought was a wadi was actually a pit. A very deep pit. And it was crowded with excavation equipment.

At that moment, Williams believed he at last understood why there were soldiers on the mountainside. They were there to guard the gold lying deep in the bottom of the pit. The bounty of ancient Egypt, he reasoned, was being systematically unearthed from the plains of Mount Sinai. He made an about-face and ran back to join his partner in the safety of the rocks.

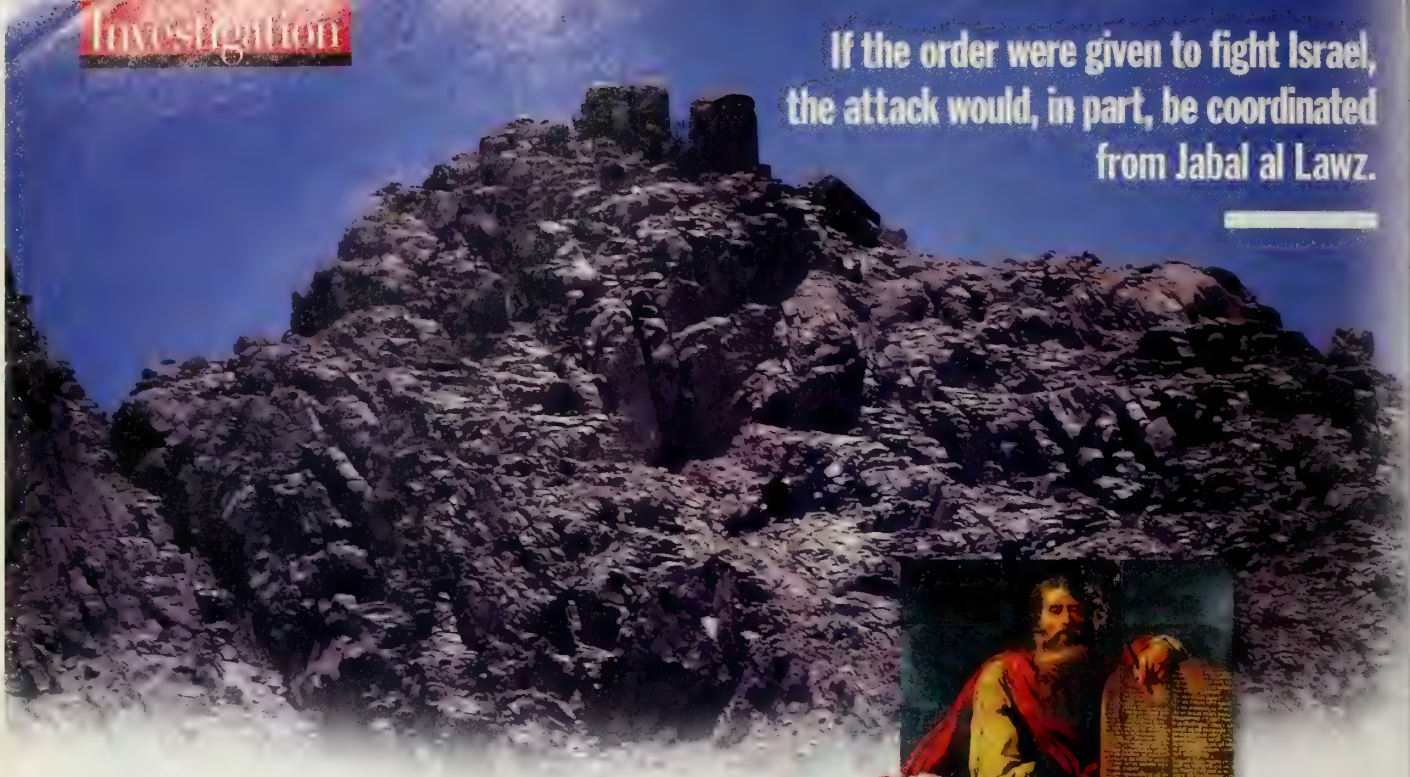
It was time to leave. Williams and Cornuke made their way toward the spot where the fence intersected with the dried-up creek bed just as the sun was beginning to rise in the desert sky. Minutes later they were on the other side, heading away from the fence, and the soldiers, and the mountain.

In July 1988, Bob Cornuke had returned to his hillside apartment in Colorado Springs. Williams was back in California.

Williams told people that he had found his own Troy, that he had made a spectacular archaeological discovery that would fill the professionals with envy when they were finally allowed to visit the site. After all, he said, he had discovered the holiest spot on earth.

But two things still troubled him. What were all those soldiers doing on the mountain? And why were the Saudis not announcing their find? In fact, when queried, the Saudi assistant deputy minister for antiquities and museum affairs, Abdullah Saeed Abu Ras, wrote back, "We would like to inform you that our Ministry has conducted extensive survey and excavation work at and around Jabal al Lawz. . . . The results of our survey and research work strongly suggest that the site does not have any similarities to the Mount of Moses."

But not long after, Williams read in the *Biblical Archaeology Review* that a national archaeological museum is currently under construction in Riyadh. While Saudi Arabia still struggles to pay off its $55 billion Gulf War debt,



If the order were given to fight Israel, the attack would, in part, be coordinated from Jabal al Lawz.

THE LAW OF THE LAND
***Above:** Moses and the Tablets of the Law,* **by Laurent de La Hire, painted in the 17th century.** ***Top:** the pinnacle of Jabal al Lawz, which according to Williams and Cornuke is the real Mount Sinai.*

the kingdom is purposefully spending more than a billion riyals—about $266 million—on a new museum. Although it will not be completed until the year 2000, Saudi officials have already boasted that its opening will attract international attention. When asked about the museum, a member of the Saudi Department of Antiquities and Museums replied, "It will surprise the world."

Yet the more Williams thought about it, he would explain, the more he became convinced that something a lot larger than an archaeological dig was going on at Jabal al Lawz. Something, he said, the Saudis were determined to keep secret.

In the summer of 1997, beyond the one-pump Al Kan gas station, close to where Cornuke and Williams had turned into the desert only to get lost and then mired in the deep sand, a road was built. Hard and smooth and wide enough for trucks, it leads directly to Jabal al Lawz.

On the summit of the mountain, across from the blackened peak where Cornuke and Williams believed that God descended to [illegible] Commandments, [illegible] by huge bases—the structures are as four-story buildings [illegible] ed. Black and rectangular, they appear to rise straight up from the mountaintop like two colossal tablets. But this is unintentional, neither Pop art nor parody. The towers are FPS-117 solid-state radar systems, each one 30,000 pounds of advanced sensor technology. At a cost of $30 million, Jabal al Lawz is being transformed into what the U.S. and Saudi planners of the Peace Shield air-defense system have designated as Site N-4. The mountain of God has become the location of a vital part of the Saudi war machine.

Major General John A. Corder (retired), the director of combat operations for Central Command Air Forces during the Gulf War, who worked as a consultant on the system, acknowledged to *Aviation Week:* "Fundamentally, Peace Shield gives the Royal Saudi Air Force the beginning of an ability to conduct full air power. They can go get the other guy back or regain lost territory."

In other words, Site N-4 is both an early-warning system against attack and an offensive military weapon. The Saudis could use it to launch an effective, well-coordinated first strike against [illegible] enemy.

If the order were given to fight Is[illegible] the attack on the Jewish state [illegible] in part be coordinated from Ja[illegible] Lawz. The mountain of Moses, [illegible] according to the Bible, an angry [illegible] God filled the sky with smoke [illegible] thunder and vowed the total destruction of Israel's enemies, has been transformed into a state-of-the-art military facility.

A group of Israeli air-force officers was sent to Fort Rucker in Alabama in the summer of 1996, for special training. They were being taught to fly AH-64 Apache attack helicopters. The drill was for the pilots to keep their birds hovering at about 100 feet, and then the front-seated gunners would let loose with laser-guided Hellfire missiles and 30-mm. cannons. They were being trained to wipe out fixed radar installations such as Site N-4. If it becomes necessary, the Israeli air force is now prepared to attack and destroy Mount Sinai.

Nearly nine years after Cornuke and Williams returned from Jabal al Lawz—in January of last year—a new edition of the *HarperCollins Concise Atlas of the Bible* was published. In this volume, a map tracing the route of the Exodus indicates that there are two possible locations for Mount Sinai. One is at the traditional spot on the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula near Saint Catherine's monastery. The other location is across the Gulf of Aqaba, in the northwestern corner of Saudi Arabia. It is the mountain known as Jabal al Lawz. □

TOP, BY LARRY WILLIAMS

"With Barry Siegel, you don't read a story.

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You live it.

And you always want more."

—Michael Connelly,
bestselling author of
The Poet and *Trunk Music*



THE

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author of *A Death in White Bear Lake*

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Vanities



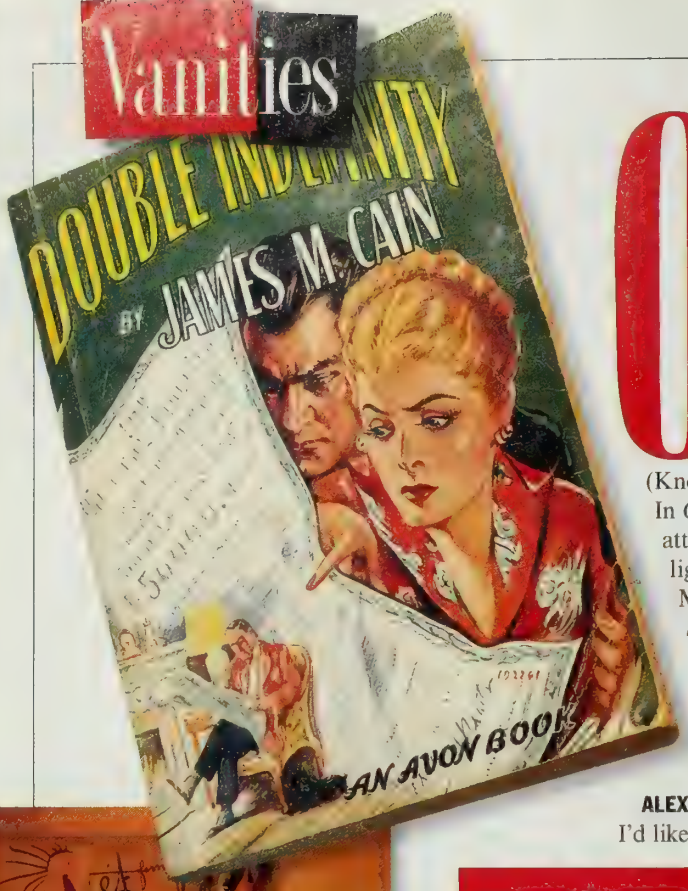
MOL FOR ONE

Occupation: Gretchen Mol, actress. **Age:** 25. **If you looked carefully, you might have seen her as:** Michael Madsen's girlfriend in *Donnie Brasco,* Vincent Gallo's [illegible] in Abel Ferrara's *The Funeral,* and Girl 12 in Spike Lee's phone-sex comedy, *Girl 6.* **Soon not to be overlooked in:** Charlie Peters's *Music from Another Room,* with Jude Law and Brenda Blethyn (out in April), and Woody Allen's fall project. **On how the set of *Donnie Brasco* resembled a frat house:** "There was a lot of real strong male energy. Johnny Depp and Al Pacino were really sweet, but most of the time I felt like I had to fend for myself and hold my ground." **In *Music from Another Room,* you break from working with celluloid's finest neurotics—Madsen, Ferrara, Allen—to be courted by an English gentleman. How was the change of pace?** "Yeah, it feels like I've done the 'hard-core' scene. Working with Jude was great. He was so enthusiastic. I really connected to this role."

HAIR BY LAURENT PHILIPPON; MAKEUP BY FATI DUBUCQ; MANICURE FROM AVEDA; MAKEUP FROM CLINIQUE. FOR DETA[illegible] LOOTS PAGE


GUCCI


florence milan new york paris london berlin tokyo hong kong







From top: Double Indemnity, *which became a film by Billy Wilder and Raymond Chandler; Edgar M. Bronfman; a standard Penguin paperback cover from 1947, and Jan Tschichold's refined design, 1949.* Bottom right, *the trademark for the harmonica company Hohner, Inc., 1966.*

Hot Type

Oh, the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune! *The Turnaround* (Random House) is former New York City police commissioner **WILLIAM BRATTON** and **PETER KNOBLER'S** take on how the Big Apple's top cop karate-chopped the city's crime epidemic in half, put a lock on quality-of-life perps, and was unlovingly ousted for his fine efforts. Expect no valentine from Rudy.

Also this month: Imagine a world without women! That's the cure for what ails the depraved and sexually obsessed hero of **T. C. BOYLE'S** new novel, *Riven Rock* (Viking). **PETER CAREY'S** rollicking new historical novel, *Jack Maggs* (Knopf), drags us into the dark back alleys of Dickensian London. In *Getting Away with Murder* (Harvard), law professor **SUSAN ESTRICH** attacks the politics of American jurisprudence. Estrich shows her lighter side with a diet book that doesn't treat you as if you had Maypo for brains, *Making the Case for Yourself: A Diet Book for Smart Women* (Riverhead)—if the jeans fit, you must acquit! Two 40-ish friends get sucker-punched by reality in **JAMES KAPLAN'S** humorous stinger, *Two Guys from Verona* (Atlantic Monthly Press). When the body of a black teenage boy is found in a river that separates two small towns—one white, one black—suspicion, resentment, and fear further divide the communities in **ALEX KOTLOWITZ'S** haunting *The Other Side of the River* (Doubleday). I'd like to buy the world a Coke, or **TYLER BLIK'S** *Trademarks of the '60s and '70s* (Chronicle), a catchall of groovy logos from the Free Love and Me Decades. **IAN McEWAN'S** *Enduring Love* (Doubleday) spins another emotionally tangled tale, this one centered on a fatal balloon accident and the repercussions of the disastrous rescue attempt. A female drifter on the run from her past finds herself held hostage in **JIM LEWIS'S** beautifully wrought tale *Why the Tree Loves the Ax* (Crown). *Good Spirits* (Putnam) is the making-of-a-businessman memoir of **EDGAR M. BRONFMAN,** the stirred but rarely shaken chairman of Seagram. Cantankerous *Catch-22* author **JOSEPH HELLER** recalls his hardscrabble life in *Now and Then: From Coney Island to Here* (Knopf). Belgian-born **LUC SANTE** sifts through the rubble of childhood memory to excavate his inventive and intriguing personal history in *The Factory of Facts* (Pantheon). **DAVID MAMET,** the playwright and screenwriter (*Wag the Dog*) who taught us hundreds of ways to say "bugger off," brings his usual passion and provocation to his treatise on what makes good drama, *Three Uses of the Knife* (Columbia University Press). In *Always in Pursuit* (Pantheon), cultural critic **STANLEY CROUCH** riffs essayistic on everything from racial militancy to celebrity nudes. **RUARI McLEAN'S** *Jan Tschichold* (Princeton Architectural Press) lauds the life and work of the Bauhaus-inspired German type and book designer. **MICHAEL IGNATIEFF'S** *The Warrior's Honor* (Metropolitan) examines the role of globe-trotting peacekeepers, missionaries, Red Cross workers, and diplomats who feel bound to intervene in bloody ethnic wars. Another sensitive issue is fully aired as **CYNTHIA GORNEY'S** *Articles of Faith* (Simon & Schuster) gives a balanced history of the post–*Roe* v. *Wade* battle over abortion. In *Dark City* (Griffin), **EDDIE MULLER** plumbs the seamy, lost world of *film noir.* In *Official Negligence* (Times Books), acclaimed reporter **LOU CANNON** deconstructs the Rodney King beating and its violent aftermath, with both the L.A.P.D. and the media taking a righteous pounding. *Like a Hole in the Head* (Little, Brown) is slacker pulp fiction written by **JEN BANBURY,** a dame out to prove that men make great damsels in distress, femmes fatales are femmes fatales, and the writing of gratuitous violence is not simply a male domain. Imagine, a world without women. Pucker up, dollface. —ELISSA SCHAPPELL



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Saint Martin


Irish playwright Martin McDonagh.

There was nothing on Martin McDonagh's résumé to suggest that by the age of 27 he would have two shows opening Off Broadway within a few weeks of each other. McDonagh abandoned education at 16 and suffered long periods of unemployment during which he developed a guilty passion for daytime TV. But he also used his time to write, turning out plays by the month and sometimes in a matter of days. *The Beauty Queen of Leenane,* which opens at the Atlantic Theater in February, took all of eight days to write. *The Cripple of Inishmaan,* which follows in early March at the Public Theater, was completed in less than five weeks.

McDonagh arrived in London's West End from Camberwell, in South London, with a pile of scripts and almost no experience of live theater. After the successful launch of his first play, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane,* by the Royal Court Theatre in 1996, he won the London *Evening Standard*'s Most Promising Playwright award. His ear for dialogue, his economy and sense of structure seemed astonishingly well formed.

Yet not all London critics swooned over McDonagh's exuberant mix of slapstick, irony, lyricism, and cruelty. "He knows just how to amuse an audience by putting up some deprived creature for humiliation and mockery," wrote Nicholas de Jongh in the *Evening Standard* of *The Cripple of Inishmaan.*

The ease of McDonagh's arrival, together with his disdain for social orthodoxies, explains some of the critical reserve. There is perhaps a little envy surrounding McDonagh, who during the *Evening Standard* presentation was told to shut up by Sean Connery. McDonagh casually advised the actor to "fuck off" and then declared that, while Connery had made just one good film, *he* would make seven brilliant plays. Two down and five to go. —HENRY PORTER

Night-Table Reading

Frederick Brosen, *artist:*
The Angel of Darkness, *by Caleb Carr (Random House). "From the trapeze of Henry James to the sawdust of Jacob Riis. An addictive thriller evocatively etched against the high and low of 19th-century New York, the New York I love, and paint."*





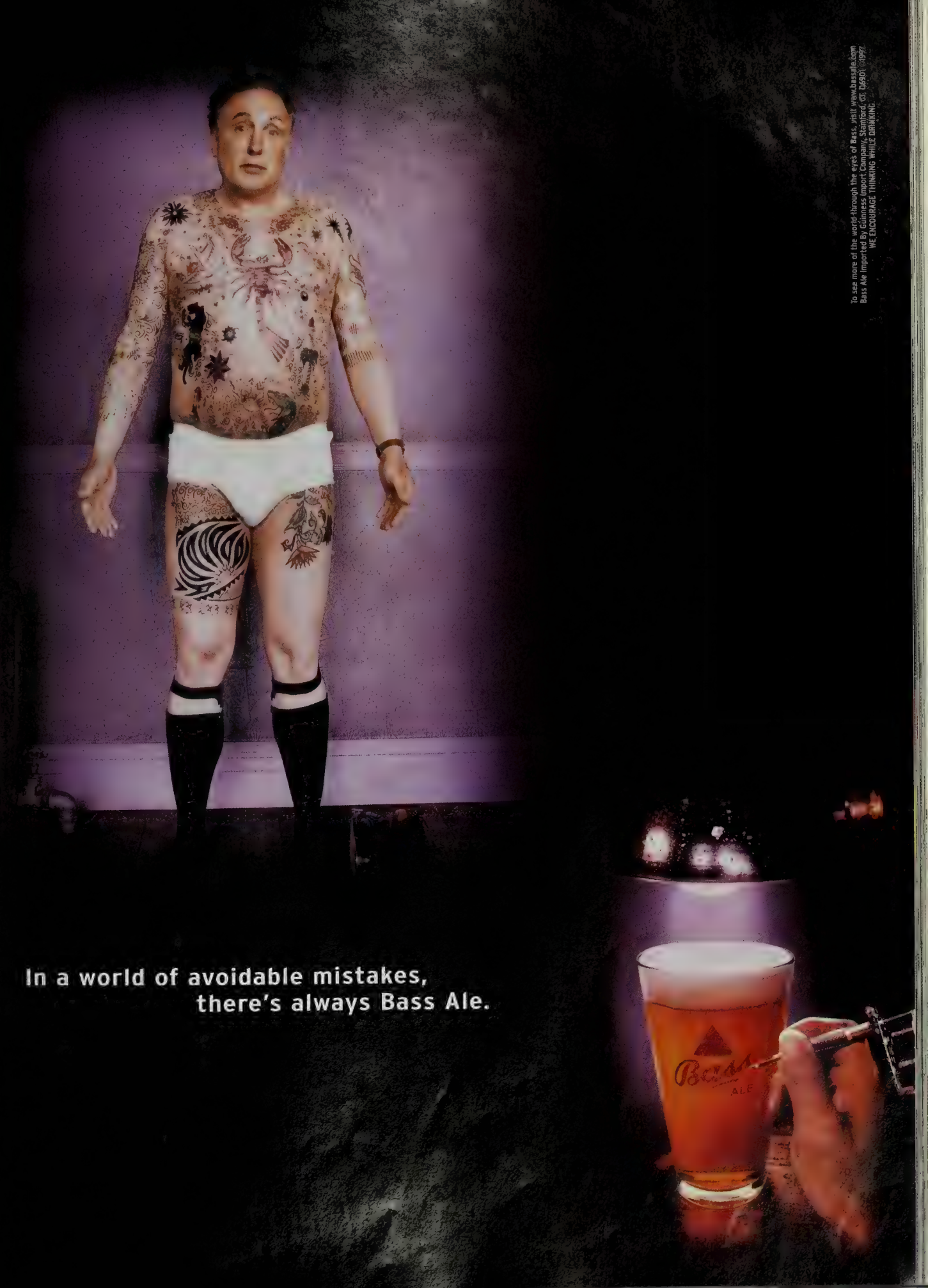
David Rockwell, *architect:*
Joseph Urban, *by Randolph Carter and Robert Reed Cole (Abbeville). "[illegible] book showing the [illegible] wide [illegible] and [illegible] igner."*

Alice Evans, *actress:*
The Mother Tongue, *by Bill Bryson (Avon). "It is a brilliant and extremely well-researched essay on the English language, but also very good fun to read—like linguistics for the layman."*



Garth Drabinsky, Ragtime *producer:*
Winchell: Gossip, Power and the Culture of Celebrity, *by Neal Gabler (Knopf). "I find the Broadway of the 40s and the nightclubs of the 50s most alluring, and Walter Winchell was the muscle controlling so much of that world."*




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WE ENCOURAGE THINKING WHILE DRINKING.

Dressed to Thrill

From fashionista to fashion icon: the Anna Piaggi story

Both a fashion editor (for Italian *Vogue* and her own, short-lived magazine, *Vanity*) and a fashion icon, Anna Piaggi has for more than 30 years been a star attraction at the Paris prêt-à-porter and couture shows, where she is inevitably the most elaborately dressed woman in sight. On the eve of this year's shows, GEORGE WAYNE catches up with the former Lagerfeld muse and helps Piaggi sort through a vast rack of fashion-world memories.

George Wayne: *Miss Piaggi, fashion observer extraordinaire, when did your clothing obsession first make itself apparent?*

Anna Piaggi: It was never an obsession. It just developed through the years. Especially when I started going to England, and when I started working with magazines.

G.W. *Anna Piaggi's wardrobe includes clothes from the last 200 years. Do you ever throw anything away?*

A.P. No, not really.

G.W. *How many closets do you have in your Milan apartment? You must have about 10 rooms just for your clothes.*

A.P. Well, I have a big apartment, but my clothes are everywhere. I'm not a historian. I don't count or categorize.

G.W. *But it is legend that you travel with 20 trunks of clothing!*

A.P. I used to travel with much more than I do now. Now I go much more compact. But I always travel with my tape recorder, my typewriter—because I don't use the computer—and my magazines and notebooks.

G.W. *Your relationship with Karl Lagerfeld spans many decades.*

A.P. I met Karl in the 60s. At the time, he was working at a couture house in Rome. He was the designer for a house called Tiziani. Mr. Tiziani was an Ameri[illegible] who had come to Italy to be an opera singer but used the money from his opera grant to become a couturier. A[illegible]ering for him, and I admired h[illegible]d I didn't even know h[illegible] the most beautiful clothes. we don't see each other so mu[illegible]



an enormous admiration. He is one of the world's greatest.

G.W. *How has Karl changed over the years?*

A.P. He hasn't really changed, but he has had an intelligent evolution. For instance, I think about the last collection I saw of his for Chanel. I can see how the effect of his being a photographer makes his fashion more and more lived.

G.W. *Is there any young designer you've seen who seems set to be the next fashion superstar?*

A.P. That is difficult to say. Maybe the next superstar will come from another hemisphere. Maybe Japan, Singapore, Australia. That is something we should watch.

G.W. *Does Mme. Piaggi still wear that McDonald's apron to fashion shows?*

A.P. Well, now I have been wearing aprons by one designer that I like for his graphic appeal, Rifat Ozbek. In London, there is a restaurant called the San Lorenzo, where Rifat took one of the aprons from the waiter, and it inspired a series in one of his collections. That is a very good attitude, to be a little bit ironic with humor. But, yes, I still have the McDonald's waistcoat.

G.W. *Where do you get your outrageous hats from?*

A.P. Some of the best ones come from Chanel. Some are designed by Philip Treacy, and a lot of very good ones I have been wearing the last few years are by Stephen Jones.

G.W. *What is Anna Piaggi working on now?*

A.P. I am working on a book which will collect the last 10 years of my work for Italian *Vogue*. It will come out this year. I think it will be very amusing. I have over 6,000 editorial pages to choose from. It's my stimulation for everything.

G.W. *The one thing we can say about Anna Piaggi: she is never banal.*

A.P. Well, that is not for me to say.

G.W. *We can now add: she is also very humble.*



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For Your Consideration ...

Some suggestions on how to wage an effective campaign for an Oscar nomination

Each year in the film industry, the specter of February, when Academy Award nominations are announced, causes studios, producers, and actors to behave in a manner that can only be called unblushing. The gauntlet of Oscar ambition was first cast down by John Wayne, the producer-director-star of 1960's *The Alamo,* who bought ads touting his film for 43 consecutive days in the Hollywood trade papers; Wayne also sent out a 183-page-long press release depicting himself as "the George Washington of films, storming the celluloid heights for God and country." (Wayne's efforts won the picture seven nominations; it took best sound.) While more recent Oscar campaigns have continued to rely on heavy advertising in the trades—*The Color Purple* nominee Margaret Avery tweaked the tradition unsuccessfully in 1985 by having her ad written in the uneducated black dialect of her character ("I knows dat I been blessed. . . . Now I is up for one of the nominations fo' Best Supporting Actress")—the electioneering has, over the years, become ever more . . . creative. Touchstone Pictures sent Academy members videocassettes of 1989's *Dead Poets Society,* complete with a crawl at the bottom of the screen listing the film's box-office figures and its Golden Globe nominations. But few Oscar gambits have been more offbeat than that employed to promote 1989's *My Left Foot:* Miramax, the film's distributor, rigged up a customized, state-of-the-art theater, where it held special screenings for disabled viewers; each attendee was rewarded with a chocolate foot. Given this rich history of tub-thumping, how will this year's Oscar hopefuls set themselves apart from the crowd? Herewith, suggestions.

BEST ACTOR ... Brendan Fraser in *George of the Jungle*

Focus on the loincloth. Send each Academy member a George videotape that has been wrapped in a loincloth which, when unpinned, reveals itself to be an electrostatic-stanching shammy. Popularize the phrase "Buffin' with Brendan." Erect promotional boutiques in Bullock's and Macy's wherein vines made of designer hosiery are "fruited" with Brendan dolls and George shammies. Release five monkeys in the lobby of the Beverly Wilshire. Extend profuse apologies when one of the monkeys buffets a Beverly Wilshire bellhop's left leg with a hard jet of urine. Assemble a panel of internationally recognized naturalists to rally on the bellhop's behalf. Publish a *New York Times* op-ed piece, signed by Fraser, which limns the mounting dangers posed by urban monkeys. Buy the bellhop and his girlfriend a large steak dinner, lavishly photographed by *People;* send the *People* photographer's nephew 5,000 shammies.





BEST ACTRESS ...

Fran Drescher in *The Beautician and the Beast*

Help Drescher campaign vigorously for the lead in the next Martin Scorsese movie. Persuade her to claim that she is neither Jewish nor from New York, but is actually a Mennonite named Honor Goodman. Arrange for Drescher to write the preface to a new edition of Christopher Lasch's *Culture of Narcissism.* Have Drescher appear in a one-woman theater production in which she re-enacts actual dialogue spoken by construction workers during the erection of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. Set off a Jerry Lewis–like worship of Drescher by French intellectuals; coin the term *"Frantastique"* to apply to those comedies whose characters exhibit a volatile relationship with nail care.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 104)


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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 102)



IRVING G. THALBERG MEMORIAL AWARD ... Henry James

Play up the dead factor. Insist that, although no one has ever campaigned for a Thalberg before, James would not have understood this, because he adopted British citizenship later in life and thus was woolly. Remind Academy members of James's poignant renderings of naïve, idealistic Americans caught in the crossfires of European sophistication and sensibility; launch a fragrance called Innocence Trampled. Remind the Academy that *The Heiress* won five Oscars in 1949 and thus started the process by which the name Henry James has become synonymous with the word "boffo." Impugn Wharton. Impugn Hardy. Pay the chairman of the Stanford English department to show up at the Golden Globes roaring drunk; encourage him to scream that all of Jane Austen's novels were plagiarized, and to carry a placard whose scrawled message reads, FUCK FORSTER.



BEST PICTURE ... *Volcano*

Hold a special screening at the base of Mount Saint Helens. Have the film's director, Mick Jackson, appear at the Directors Guild of America awards, his eyebrows singed off. FedEx each Academy member a lava lamp in which every time the miniature clay version of Tommy Lee Jones's head bumps up against the inside of the lamp's vessel the writing on his forehead is faintly discernible as reading, "1993, best supporting." Organize a special *Volcano*-themed segment of *Battle of the Network Stars* in which *Full House*'s Mary-Kate and Ashley Fuller Olsen are "chased" down water slides by angry streams of bubbling-hot Kraft Singles. Recycle WWOR-TV's Pat Collins's blurb "This is the volcano movie to see!" lest Academy members unfavorably compare the film with *Dante's Peak*, *Joe Versus the Volcano*, or *Krakatoa, East of Java*. Point out that Krakatoa is actually *west* of Java.

BEST PICTURE ... *Anastasia*

Point out to the Academy that the demise of imperial Russia is *fun*. Host a treasure hunt in which noisome Los Angeleno teens look for samovars which have been filled with beauty products and hidden throughout the Beverly Center. Universalize the film; claim that, in our own unique way, we are *all* spunky vagabonds who have fallen on our heads and repressed our czarist past. Lure Academy members to screenings by assuring them that the film is not like one of those long Russian novels where you get to the end and realize that Yuri and Nikolaich are in fact the same character. Rope off an area between the Clinique and Lancôme stations at Nordstrom's, called Rasputin's Den, wherein slow-moving customers are consigned to an eerie cosmetics limbo.



BEST PICTURE ... *The Tango Lesson*

Trumpet this autobiographical film—in which filmmaker Sally Potter, essentially playing herself, worries that the tango dancer she's fallen in love with is using her in order to get a part in a movie—as "haunting meta-cinema." Release a sequel about a filmmaker named Sally Potter who has made a movie called *The Tango Lesson* and who worries that her tango-dancing boyfriend is using her in order to get a part in a sequel. Film *The Making of the Sequel to "The Tango Lesson."* Publish *Behind the Scenes of "The Making of the Sequel to 'The Tango Lesson.'"* Have Quentin Crisp, who played Queen Elizabeth I in Sally Potter's film *Orlando*, appear on the *Today* show wearing a lot of gauze and mirrors as if he were the Heisenberg uncertainty principle. Cut Crisp's segment short when he has to go to an Academy screening of Sally Potter's *The Tango Lesson*.

—HENRY ALFORD




VERSACE

VANITY FAIR
FEBRUARY 1998

Great Danes

At 14, Claire Danes starred in the acclaimed ABC series *My So-Called Life*. Four years and nine movies later, she has postponed Yale for a flurry of roles in *U-Turn*, *The Rainmaker* (opposite ex-boyfriend Matt Damon), *Les Misérables*, and *Polish Wedding*. Riding the Splash Mountain roller coaster at Disneyland, Danes gives KEVIN SESSUMS the lowdown on her bohemian, Method-acting childhood, camping out in the back of a car with Australian rocker Ben Lee, and her new $1 million loft in SoHo

PHOTOGRAPHED BY AMY ARBUS



CLAIRE AND PRESENT DANGER

If she were a pistol or a harpist, she'd be considered a novelty," says Francis Joni Cassola of Diana, photographed in Cornwall, Connecticut, last September.



The car pulls into a parking lot named for a duck. "The last time I was here, I'd been hired by a bunch of Arabs," says the driver. "The family of a Saudi prince. A couple of wives with their faces covered. Kids, the same everywhere, all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. Brought them here every day for three damned weeks. Couldn't get enough of the place."

"The last time I was here, I was five," Claire Danes tells him, all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed herself at the prospect of revisiting Disneyland for the first time in 13 years. This acclaimed actress—self-possessed, a seasoned cinematic professional after gracing nine films—is all of 18 years old. The driver opens the door for her, and she climbs out into the California light. Wearing a pair of embroidered shorts, a tiny T-shirt the color of an old *National Geographic,* and Dr. Scholl's sandals, Danes breaks into a little skip as she nears the myriad ticket booths that have put Ana[illegible] map. "Want to hear a joke?" [illegible] into Walt Disney's office," she [illegible] Walt says, 'So what's th[illegible]gh it's Minnie, man! I [illegible] W[illegible]. 'O.K., cool out. Why do you [illegible] Mickey says, 'Walt, man, she's silly. [illegible] come on. You're a talking mouse. [illegible] to be pointing fingers.' He goes, 'But, Walt, man, she's FUCKING GOOFY!'

"Get it?" Danes says. Then she shuffles her Dr. Scholl's toward one ride after another, finally heading for the water roller coaster known as Splash Mountain. "When I was five, California was the most exotic thing I could think of," she says, climbing into a seat in what looks like a hollowed-out log made of fiberglass. She lets out a squeal at our first quick dive down a giant gorge. "I wasn't at all disappointed!" she hollers back at me, crammed in behind her and soaked. "It was all so glamorous!"

"I look like Minnie Mouse," Danes complains to David Letterman as she takes her seat on his television show a couple of months later. Her hair has been curled in a deconstructed–Shirley Temple do, and someone has persuaded her to wear a strapless Dolce & Gabbana dress. She twists her curls in her fingers and fidgets with the dress. She and Dave flirt as best they can in front of millions of viewers before she demonstrates a dance from *Footloose,* her favorite movie when she was a kid. This is the first stop in a packed week of New York media appearances to coincide with the release of Francis Ford Coppola's film version of John Grisham's *The Rainmaker,* in which Danes co-stars with her ex-boyfriend Matt Da-



CLAIRE SAILING

"Claire is not the kind of actress who dictates everything," says Winnie Holzman, the creator of *My So-Called Life*. "She doesn't fill in all the blanks."

mon. She's also in town to appear on *The Rosie O'Donnell Show* and to host *Saturday Night Live*, still after all these years one of the totem spots for who's-hot-right-this-moment fame.

By the end of the week, Danes is exhausted, but Fridays at *Saturday Night Live* are set aside for camera blocking, and she patiently goes about the tedious business. Everyone finally takes a break between scene changes, and Danes uses it to grab a catnap in the host's dressing room. Next door, in the dressing area reserved for the show's musical guests, Cheri Oteri, one of *Saturday Night Live*'s liveliest new cast members, plops down on a black velvet sofa. Every inch of wall space is taken up with photos of acts which have performed on the show. "It's amazing to me how someone so young can be so centered," Oteri says, discussing Danes. "She's handling all of this quite gracefully. Live comedy is so different. So many people get so scared. But she's allowing herself to have fun as well as picking things up really well. You can tell she's a real pro."

When Danes emerges from her dressing room, she briskly reads her cue cards for an absurd scene about releasing Mr. Peepers, a pet that is a mixture of a man and a monkey, back into the jungle. The cast keeps breaking up at the premise—Ionesco by way of the Catskills—but the stagehands couldn't look more bored. A couple of writers, huddled behind a camera's crane, are already whispering about the following week's host, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and laughing about a Larry King skit that ran the previous week. Danes has the dazed, faraway look of an artsy little girl stuck in a geography class.

She spent most of her childhood growing up in SoHo during that Manhattan neighborhood's 1980s bohemian heyday. Her mother, Carla, an artist from Vermont, and her father, Chris, an architectural photographer who is now a computer consultant, owned a loft there and encouraged their child to pursue her own interests in the arts. At the age of nine, she studied modern dance and performed in avant-garde works in the East Village. Later she switched to acting, and her parents enrolled her in the Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute.

Did she study the Method?

"Oh, you know, we did sense memory and stuff like that," Danes says, shrugging.

Wasn't she very young for that?

"I was 11!" she replies in all seriousness. "I had a whole life! I remember being pre-verbal. I remember being held as an infant by one of my mom's friends. She didn't know how to hold me, and I was really uncomfortable. It was like, *I know I'm going to have to wait this out.* Babies are highly attuned. They just don't know how to communicate."

"She's one of those people who was born enormously


"When I turned 18,
actresses who were sweet to me
when I was 16 became
just a little colder."



MELANCHOLY DANES

"There is a sadness to Claire," says Gabriel Byrne. "I don't know if 'sadness' is too strong a word, but there's certainly something deep within her that preoccupies her."

gifted," says Jared Leto, who portrayed Jordan Catalano on the TV series *My So-Called Life,* the heartthrob for whom Danes's character, Angela Chase, will perpetually swoon as long as MTV keeps running its highly rated repeats of the high-school drama, which first aired during ABC's 1994 season.

Danes attended P.S. 3, P.S. 11, the Dalton School, and the Professional Performing Arts School in Manhattan before moving to Los Angeles at 14 to star in *My So-Called Life.* In L.A., following in the footsteps of Jodie Foster, who later directed her in *Home for the Holidays,* she studied at the Lycée Français, when not being privately tutored on various sets. Foster became a kind of mentor during the film, and Danes has now been accepted at another of Foster's former schools, Yale, where Danes's paternal grandfather was once the dean of the school of art and architecture. She is planning to major in psychology or philosophy or art history, but is putting off her studies for a year to make another movie or two, including *Brokedown Palace*—about two young women thrown into jail in Southeast Asia and charged with drug smuggling—which she is currently filming in the Philippines.

Back in California, Danes meets me at the Rose Café in Santa Monica, a few blocks from the apartment where she lives with her parents during her increasingly infrequent stays on the West Coast. She has just returned from London, where she had to dub some dialogue for her part as Cosette in the upcoming nonmusical film version of *Les Misérables,* directed by Bille August, in which her screen parents are played by Liam Neeson and Uma Thurman. It's one of three movies she recently made back-to-back. The others are *Polish Wedding,* directed by Theresa Connelly, in which she portrays the pregnant working-class daughter of Lena Olin and Gabriel Byrne, and *The Rainmaker.*

Danes is at that point in her life—18 going on 40—where she's seen everything yet has the energetic desire to see even more. After her work in London was completed, she dashed off to Spain, where she met up with her new boyfriend, the 19-year-old Australian rocker Ben Lee, who records on the Grand Royal label. They spent a few days roaming around Madrid and Toledo together.

In 72 hours, after an appearance with Jay Leno on *The Tonight Show* to plug Oliver Stone's latest movie, *U-Turn,* in which she plays a dumb desert rat of a girl, she is going to pack again and board a flight to Australia, where she is to meet Lee's parents for the first time.

"I ran into Veronica Webb in the garden of the Chateau Marmont," I tell her. "She said that every dyed-blonde, alternative-rock, Guess?-wearing girl has a crush on Ben Lee. I set her straight, though—said you were the one who got him."

Her face lights up the way it can on-screen. She explains how she had been hooked on Lee's music for some time and had been attracted to him before she ever met him. "So my friends [illegible] ncy as a surprise for my 18th birthday," she says. "I've been on my own now for six months, and I've been pretty much living with him. . . . I'm a starfucker!" she exclaims, laughing at the notion of such a boast. "I recently spent a couple of weeks with Ben in the back of the car, just being supportive and the dumb girlfriend on the road with him during one of his concert tours. That was great. It felt really good to be an appendage after I'd been the center of attention for so long. . . . On the Internet there were some fans of mine warning me that they were really concerned because they heard I'd been dating Ben. They mistakenly thought he was younger than I was and I could be arrested for statutory rape."

"*That* could change your image," I say.

"I used to have arguments with people a couple of years ago about this. People who were trying to figure out what kind of 'image' they were going to present to the world, how they were going to *concoct* it. I felt, Why be that concerned with that—why not just *be?* . . . It's funny to grow up in this business. When I turned 18 and started going to different functions and was around other actresses, the same ones who were sweet to me when I was 16 had become just a little colder and a little more bitter and a little more standoffish, just because I was jumping into their bracket now. I suddenly realized how competitive all this is. That was *scary.*"

"Claire probably has the most glamorous adolescence I've ever seen," says Jodie Foster, having, one assumes, averted her eyes from her own. "I definitely have a soft spot for the child-actor thing. I'm always really concerned that the experience be as purposive and, I guess, have as much consciousness as you possibly can. You can easily inflict all sorts of wounds on actors—especially young ones. I took such a shine to Claire because she doesn't come with any weird baggage. She's so grounded, and you can talk to her about a whole lot of other things besides acting. . . . She's a pretty serious girl."

"Certainly, in person, Claire has a kind of distancing quality, a kind of remove," says writer Winnie Holzman, the creator and co-executive producer of *My So-Called Life.* "She was like that when I first met her, though," claims Holzman, remembering the striking youngster who walked in to audition for the show's lead. Danes had flown out to Los Angeles to meet with Steven Spielberg, who was casting *Schindler's List.* He was so impressed with her that he immediately offered her a part in his film. She turned it down because she thought at that point that it would require too much time away from school. "It's not that she became a movie star and *decided* to be removed," says Holzman. "I mean, that's why she *is* a movie star. . . . Claire has a kind of magnetic mystery. It draws your emotions in. She is not the kind of actress who dictates everything. She doesn't fill in all the blanks."

There is nothing superfluous in Danes's acting. What she has mastered at such a startlingly young age is the ability to remain *still* on-screen. Yet she CONTINUED ON PAGE 172

"It's unbelievable how much money you can make in this business. It's *scary*."



CLAIRE VISION

"Claire probably has the most glamorous adolescence I've ever seen," says *Home for the Holidays* director Jodie Foster.

Spotlight

DISNEY'S NEW STAR

Early on in the Broadway production of *The Lion King* a brilliant sea of savanna inches up, patch by patch, from the stage of the exquisitely restored New Amsterdam Theatre. It's amazing, but you think, Technology. Then, as the grass grows higher, actors with tables of grass atop their heads are revealed. Low tech to high effect. A signature Julie Taymor sequence.

Though *The Lion King,* which has riveted the New York theater community, has brought the experimental director-designer heightened visibility, Taymor is no stranger to critical success and has enjoyed something akin to a cult following among some pretty impressive people. In the early 70s she worked with Joseph Chaikin at the Open Theater and with Peter Schumann at the Bread and Puppet Theater. The veteran Broadway producer Elizabeth McCann recalls going to Off Broadway's tiny St. Clement's Church to see Taymor's carnival Mass, *Juan Darién* (in 1988), and being "blown away." Why had she gone? Stephen Sondheim had been raving to a mutual friend about Taymor. The Newton, Massachusetts, native's first taste of commercial success came when Lincoln Center opted for a 10-week run of *Juan Darién*. "But even then," says McCann, "she was perceived as an exciting but sort of avant-garde figure. It took Disney—the most 'commercial' of entrepreneurs—to see that a breath of life from the avant-garde was exactly what Broadway needed."

After a decade of mega-musical melodramas and plodding revivals, boy did Broadway need her. Taymor's Eastern-flavored puppetry techniques have turned *The Lion King* into Broadway's biggest success story in recent memory. Next on Taymor's calendar? A film version of her acclaimed staging of *Titus Andronicus* and a fall production of *The Flying Dutchman* at the Houston Grand Opera.

"The fascinating thing is she's been around," says McCann. And yet it would seem she's just arrived. —MIMI KRAMER



PH. BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ



HANGING BY A THREAD

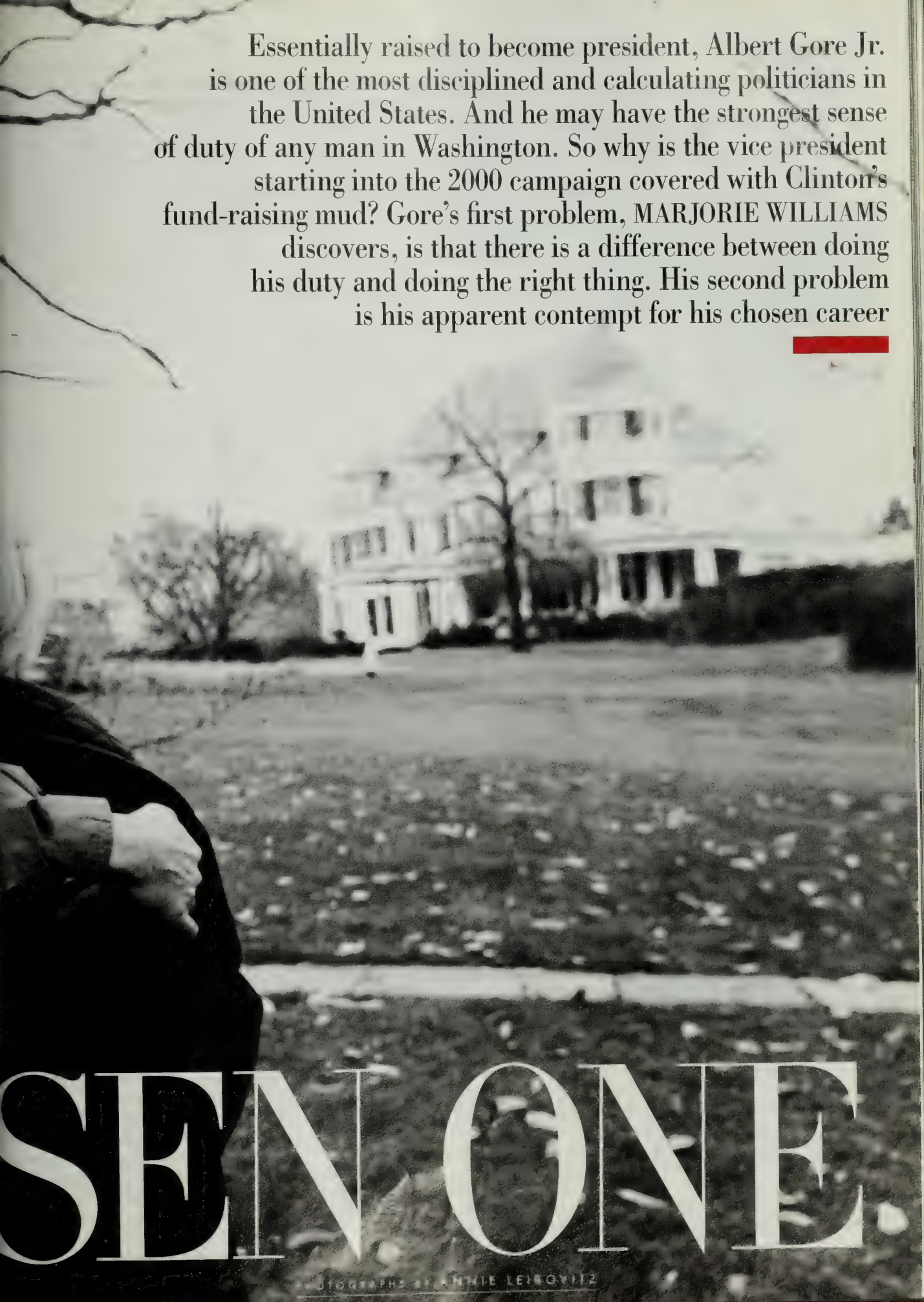
"In traditional puppet theater, you don't see the mechanics," says Julie Taymor. "In this theater, the mechanics have meaning."



THE CHO

DEEPLY WOUND
Al and Tipper [illegible] grounds of the lake [illegible] mansion last December. Under his wintry calm, friends say, Al Gore is an emotional man. The Gores' marriage is regarded as that rare thing, a passionate union that has retained fire after 27 years.

Essentially raised to become president, Albert Gore Jr. is one of the most disciplined and calculating politicians in the United States. And he may have the strongest sense of duty of any man in Washington. So why is the vice president starting into the 2000 campaign covered with Clinton's fund-raising mud? Gore's first problem, MARJORIE WILLIAMS discovers, is that there is a difference between doing his duty and doing the right thing. His second problem is his apparent contempt for his chosen career



SEN ONE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

It's true, what everyone says about Al Gore. There is another Gore, a man funnier, more relaxed, warmer, happier than the very formal politician who serves as the 45th vice president of the United States. He has a dry sense of humor, that Gore; he wears Nike running shorts, and flip-flops on his oddly chunky feet, and he drinks beer. He uses four-letter words, and has the explosive, face-reddening laugh of a self-conscious teenager. That Gore, who stands with some grace on the verge of turning 50, has worked hard at understanding himself and his strange, boxed life as a boy and then a man who was channeled by powerful forces of love and tradition and sorrow and duty to the office he now occupies.

And then there's this guy: CarefulMan, whose signatures are a blue suit and white shirt, a pair of shiny wing tips, a studied frown of concentration. CarefulMan begins a recent Wednesday on a dais at a Goodwill Industries storefront office in the bleakest part of Orlando, Florida, flanked by officials and beneficiaries of a program designed to help its clients find and keep jobs.

From the start, he's a portrait in stone: uncomfortable, unconsciously condescending, and so rigid in his bearing that he might be wearing a neck brace. "The number of people on welfare in this country is now below 4 percent for the first time since way back in 1969," he says. Only why is he talking so slowly? "The president has negotiated and signed [illegible] called *wai-vers* for 43 states . . . [illegible] is addressing this group of 50-odd adults in the tone of a pre[illegible] teacher reasoning with th[illegible] olds, as if poverty made you [illegible]

The bulk of the event involves Gore's asking questions—gleaned from a stack of file cards he carries with him—of the men and women who sit with him at the front of the room. One man offers a self-description that is apparently not as wretched as the cue cards suggest it should be: when he has finished, Gore prompts clumsily, "You were actually homeless, and you had other problems, and you were really kind of flat on your back for a while there, weren't you?"

In truth, Gore spends most of the event doing and saying the right things. He nods in the right places, furrows his handsome brow, and now and then makes little murmurs of interest and assent. But there isn't an ounce of authenticity in the show.

And this is the story of Gore's life: the great care that he has taken—to say things right, to *get* it right—has once again defeated him.

He is, if anything, more careful now than ever before, after a nightmare year in which he found himself the poster boy for everything that was excessive and seamy and possibly illegal about the Clinton-Gore campaign's fund-raising in the 1996 election. As the calendar flipped toward the new year, it seemed that Gore's ordeal was over: Fred Thompson's Senate investigation had sputtered to a frustrated halt, and Attorney General Janet Reno had decided against the appointment of an independent counsel to probe the president's and vice president's phone calls to donors.

But in the end the controversy raised the question, always a Beltway favorite, of whether Gore *has what it takes.* He had stumbled so badly in addressing the problem, with his staff's ever changing accounts of the slapstick Buddhist-temple fund-raiser that vacuumed up illegal contributions from monastics, and with his own strange press conference in the wake of the revelation, last March, that he had called donors from the White House. Repeating seven times the assertion that "no controlling legal authority" existed to suggest that an arcane law against such solicitations applied to him, he showed the tone-deafness to nuance that has always seemed so [illegible]ffling in a man so smart. When it [illegible] over, he had done almost enough [illegible]e, in under half an hour, to undo four years' worth of golden press.

At a deeper level, the scandal called into question Gore's own most precious beliefs about his career. Gore has always sought to be something subtly different from a real politician: something smarter, more rigorous, less compromised. "Gore has spent so much of his career trying to be an issues guy—trying desperately not to look like the usual politician," says a man who has known him for years through Tennessee politics. Reporters "hold him up to a higher standard," adds Bob Squier, Gore's longtime media adviser. "And the reason is that the standard they feel they're holding him up to is his own."

For any other politician, it would be a normal day's work to assert that he had done only what everyone does, and what the law allows. To see Gore reduced to this argument was to see a man choking on his own most cherished vanities, and to wonder, Why does one of the country's most successful politicians have such a pained contempt for his trade?

It's not that Gore has ever shied away from the hardball aspects of politics. In his ill-fated 1988 race for the presidency, he managed to convey only the coldest, most aggressive parts of his personality, attacking his fellow candidates at an unusually snarling pitch. And he has been rightly described as one of the most calculating politicians at work in America today. From the time he entered Congress in 1977, he carefully picked issues that were susceptible to near-term solution—preferably solutions that could be credited to a single congressman—or those, like technological development, the environment, and nuclear strategy, that appealed to his love of the abstract. "My sense is that he rarely does anything instinctively," says John Seigenthaler, the former publisher of the Nashville *Tennessean,* who is a close family friend. Even on the issues that most engage Gore, critics say, his rhetoric far outreaches the actions he proposes, which tend to stamp him as—in his words—"a raging moderate."

Certainly he has shown himself capable of the strategic reversal: initial-

ly opposed to legal abortion (Gore once even voted for an amendment defining an embryo, from the moment of conception, as a "person"), he later embraced abortion rights. And ever since he ran for president, he has worked assiduously to lessen the hostility spawned in Hollywood by his wife Tipper's mid-80s campaign to alert parents to obscenity in rock lyrics.

Gore has pursued his political ambitions with rare drive and discipline. From the time of his first electoral victory, he followed a bruising schedule of town meetings in his district and, later, his state. As vice president, he has pursued the high-end version of this hunt, jumping with a will into the most punishing travel, the dullest ribbon-cutting. On a Sunday in late October, he returned to Washington in the early hours of the morning from a political dinner in Iowa, got up and ran in the 26.2-mile Marine Corps Marathon with two of his daughters, and in the afternoon stood for two hours in a werewolf costume at his annual Halloween party while members of the press corps that had made his year so miserable filed past to shake his hand and pose for signed photographs with him and Tipper.

Finally, he has always been at or near the top of his class as a political fund-raiser. In both of his Senate races, Gore amassed impressive war chests; he raised $2.6 million for his 1990 campaign, in which his opponent spent less than $9,000.

For this reason, the public-interest community marveled at the tone of the commentary with which the press covered Gore's engulfment in the fund-raising controversy. "It [was] more than a little amusing to me that everyone was shocked—shocked!—to find that he was a normal pol," says Charles Lewis, executive director of the Center for Public Integrity. "Anyone who had watched him knew that he was always in the money. He's not this geeky, safety-glasses Eagle Scout guy that is the image we've all constructed for him."

But none of this changes the overridingly strange truth: politics is not something that Al Gore is innately good at. It's not even something he likes very much—only something he has mastered through will, ambition, and grindingly hard work. "It always strikes me," says a close friend, "that politics is an odd business for Gore to be in."

"I think if Al Gore had not been the son of his father . . . and was not expected to pursue a career in politics, he never would have," says a former Clinton White House official.

Enter the dread comparison: Al Gore is no Bill Clinton. Reporters who just yesterday were deriding Clinton as "slick Willie" for his amazing powers of seduction are today comparing Gore unfavorably with him. But the contrast does point up the fact that Gore is extraordinarily introverted for a world-class politician. "Maybe if [Gore] wasn't so disciplined about it, it would fall apart, because it's not what he does when nobody's looking," says a former Clinton aide. "Clinton doesn't have to be so disciplined, because the drive is so innate. Gore has to lock it in much more carefully."

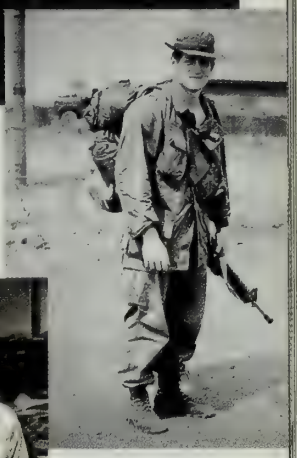
Gore's characteristic approach to any problem is to take the largest, most systemic view he can. Thus, when he found himself at 23 full of a young man's questions—about what he had seen in Vietnam and what he should do with his life—his answer was to attend a year of divinity school. When he decided, as a young congressman, to get involved in the then feverish debate over nuclear weapons, he immersed himself in a 13-month tutorial about nuclear strategy and emerged from cogitation with his own grand strategic plan. And when his young son nearly died, in 1989, Gore undertook the most bookish midlife crisis it is possible to imagine, studying works of psychoanalysis and pondering the grand societal impact of family dysfunction.

It is hard to conceive of a mind less rooted in the conditional, the transitory, the relative—the imperatives that rule most politicians' lives. This





Senator Albert Gore and Al junior, *left*, in their apartment in Washington's Fairfax Hotel in 1954. *Below*, Gore senior with Pauline, young Al, and campaign manager Harry Phillips in Nashville celebrating his victory in the 1958 primary.



Al Gore, *right*, in Vietnam as a military journalist in the 20th Engineer Brigade, 1970.



Left, in the offices of *The Tennessean* in 1974, Al Gore confers with photographer Bill Preston Sr.

"If Gore had not been the son of his father, expected to pursue a career in politics, he never would have."

mind, in its struggle to shape itself to a life at odds with its natural contours, is Gore's great gift and Gore's great weakness.

Like most reporters who travel with him, I've met the other Gore, talking at the back of the plane about things like kids and books and birthdays. It's a political transaction, to be sure, but Gore's ease in it and his air of self-awareness are real.

That, however, is all off the record. Locked away. Perversely, Gore is far too careful ever to show that side of himself where it could do him the most good. Instead, he begins our one formal interview with a lengthy monologue. And as he gets well into it—CarefulMan has something very specific that he would like to convey—he is so changed from his earlier self that I am gripped by the temptation to do something, or say something, shockingly wrong. To call him a name; to ask him to dance; to peer down his throat, perhaps, and hallo *Is anybody in there?*

Since becoming vice president, Gore has so insistently spoofed his own rigid quality that he has successfully defined it as a simple personal attribute like any other: like having green eyes, or a bald spot. It comes, then, as something of a shock to watch him in the public arena. He isn't merely a bit more formal, a few degrees more self-conscious. When Gore vanishes behind his public mask, he seems to undergo a wild, almost violent act of self-compression.

The athlete's body language suddenly broadcasts a lack of fluency: his arms dangle lifelessly from his shoulders, and he seems to have no joints at all above the waist. The deliberate pauses in the middle of his sentences stretch into yawning silences. "There is simply *no one* in the U.S. Senate," he seems to tell the audience at a fund-raiser for California senator Barbara Boxer. Huh? Oh, there's more. "Who fights as *hard* for what she *believes* in as Barbara Boxer."

And then he claps! Gore's awkward way of applauding is legend among former aides. He [illegible] and straight [illegible]

"He's not this geeky, safety-glasses Eagle Scout guy that is the image we've all constructed for him."





AN OFFICE AND A GENTLEMAN
Al Gore at his desk in the Old Executive Office Building. The intellectual, science-oriented side of Gore is clearly something that he has emphasized in building his image.

if serving a pizza, then mechanically moves the other arm—the whole arm, with that strange jointlessness—up and down like a bellows. "Al Gore clapping is one of the great sights," says a friend. "Here is a man who was always clapped *for*. He doesn't have the first idea how to do it."

When he is at his worst, his audiences don't even get his jokes. At an especially deadly fund-raiser in Los Angeles, upon hearing himself introduced as the greatest vice president in history, he remarks, "Sometimes, when I hear a phrase like 'greatest vice president,' I think, *Jumbo shrimp.*" The audience of almost two dozen wealthy donors misses the oxymoron and simply stares at him, in puzzlement: Why is this sober fellow talking about crustaceans?

He is more fluid some days than others. But even when he comes close to political ease, he undermines himself at every turn. One former Gore aide recalls a 1996 campaign event at which a young man in the audience introduced his mother. "The vice president said, 'That's your mother? She looks like she could be your sister.' And everyone went, '*Awww,* what a sweet man.' The crowd was totally with him. So then he said, 'That's a line you often hear, but in this case it really applies.' Like, *I would never use a* line *on someone; I'm just using my superior powers of observation to reach a biological conclusion.*"

"He never seems engaged in the moment," says a Democratic strategist. "It's as if there's always an essential part of him standing off in the corner watching himself perform . . . making sure he did exactly what he was supposed to do."

Gore aides and fans have numerous explanations for these strange performances. "Having grown up in the public eye has made him really careful in his public presentation," says one high-level Gore staffer. Roy Neel, a former aide who is one of his most trusted advisers, offers, "He came to politics very young, and he wanted to be taken seriously. So he was doubly cautious, and precise, about how he presented himself."

There is some validity to both of these views. Yet neither really capt[illegible] radical quality of Gore's shifts in [illegible] havior. One can't watch [illegible] formations without feeling that they are profoundly connected to Gore's emotional makeup—that there is something *chosen* about them.

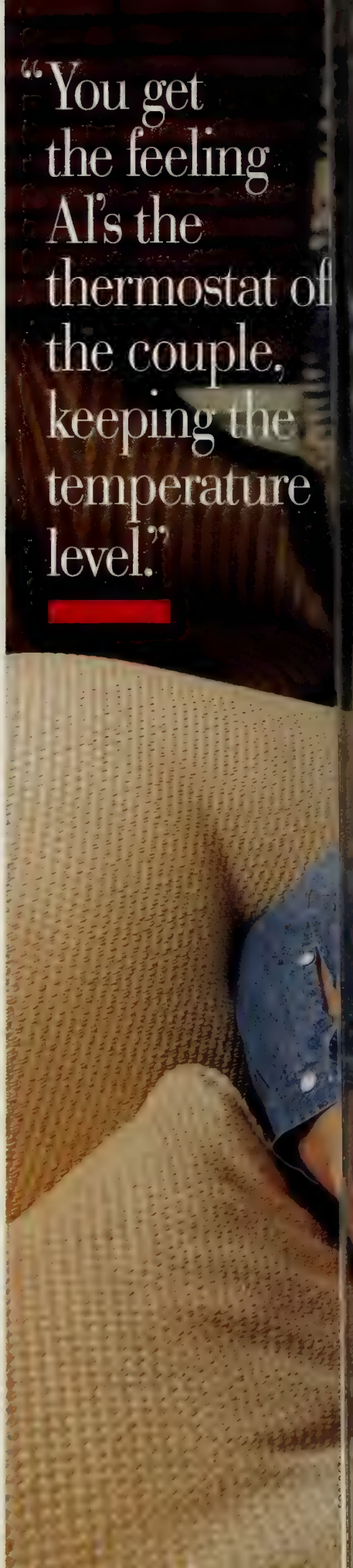
Now watch him in California, delivering a speech to a gathering of biotechnology executives. While he warms up with a string of his dry jokes, his true pleasure here is in getting down to business: to the Cartesian origins of the scientific revolution; to the "gestalt effect" of gene mapping; to "structure-based drug design . . . the directed synthesis of new compounds . . . computational science . . . the median review time for new molecular entities, or N.M.E.'s."

"*Or N.M.E.'s.*" He knows their lingo, and he wants them to know that he knows it. Gore is engaged by science in a way that far outstrips the claim on him of any human realm. This intellectual, science-oriented side of Gore is clearly something that he has emphasized in building his image. But it is nonetheless real. During a single day of travel, in "casual" conversations with reporters at the back of his plane, he begins with El Niño and global warming and later manages to touch on the human-genome project; the conversion to scientific use of Cold War intelligence technology; the development of energy-efficient cars; and, in an extended, late-night lecture, climatology. As he talks, he is at one moment scrawling a map of the oceans' primary movements on the nearest piece of paper ("Scientists now think it's a continuous loop, like a Möbius strip"), and at another filching an ice cube from a reporter's drink, with his fingers, to illustrate the actions of melting glaciers.

Some people find this impressive, some exasperating. On the one hand, here is Gore's great Univac of a brain in action, showing off his legendary powers of absorption and categorization. At its best, Gore's dedication to the logic of science makes him less inclined to fudge than most politicians. His long investment in the issue of global warming, for example, culminated in his decision to go to December's Kyoto summit on climate change; [illegible] reaty that resulted—which is deeply [illegible] among

CONTINUED ON PAGE 166

"You get the feeling Al's the thermostat of the couple, keeping the temperature level."





LOVE STORY
Al and Tipper Gore in the library of the vice-presidential mansion. Gore recently claimed that Erich Segal based his romantic novel on them, but Segal subsequently denied it.

Boys' Town

Despite the 60s, co-education, and Nintendo, the Boy Scouts of America are some four million strong as they prepare for the 21st century. At Fort A. P. Hill near Fredericksburg, Virginia, BRUCE WEBER found 30,000 thrifty, brave, and clean Scouts gathered for the quadrennial jamboree




BE PREPARED FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
NATIONAL JAMBOREE
CHARACTER COUNTS
BILLY FINKE
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA







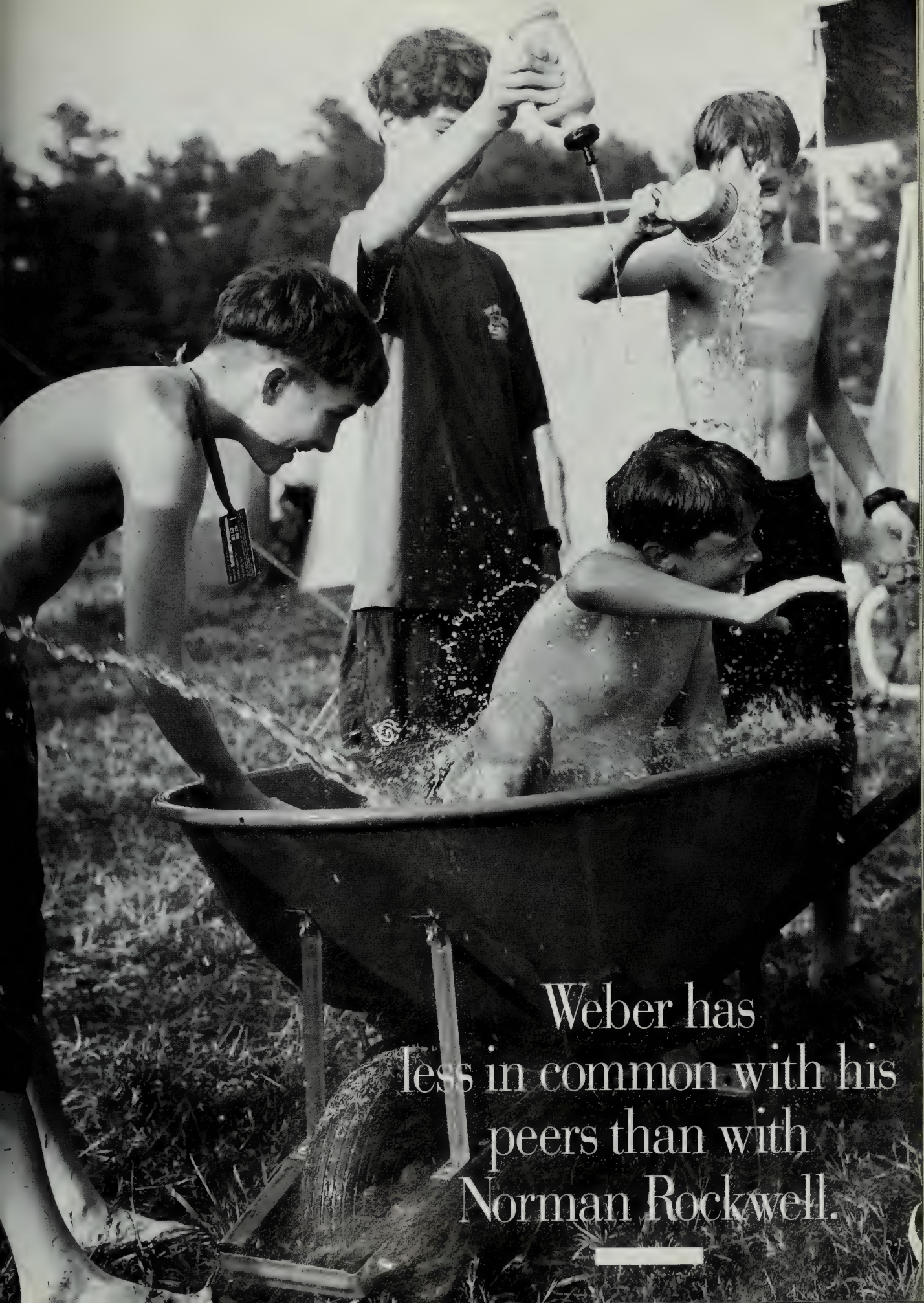
Clockwise from above: each of the troops sets up a subcamp such as this one, designed and built by Troop 909 of Salt Lake City, Utah; some of the 5,000 volunteer troop leaders who attended the jamboree salute the flag during the opening ceremonies; a Scout raises the flag first thing in the morning; the subcamp of Utah Troop 905, whose Scouts stitched their tepee by hand; a 1959 Norman Rockwell poster. *Opposite:* four Scouts take time out for a wheelbarrow bath.



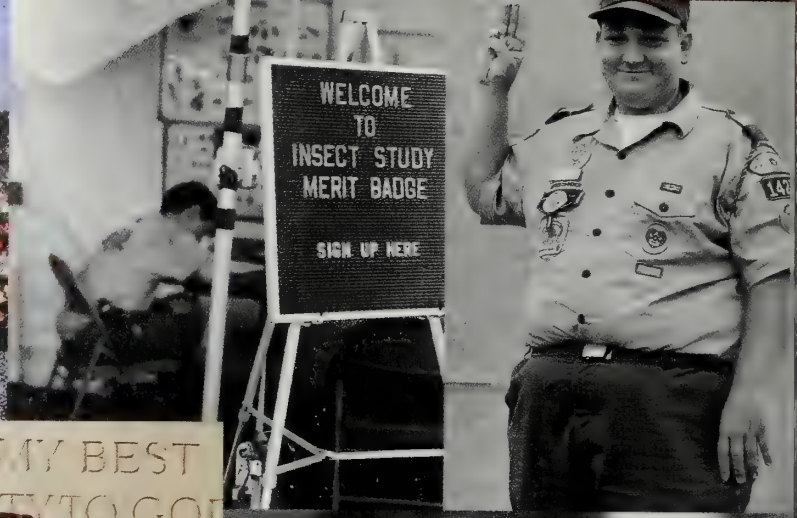


"Buckskin games"; "snorkel search"; "merit badge"; "orienteering." This forgotten childhood jargon lives on, believe it or not. The Boy Scouts of America, founded in the Bull Moose afterglow of the Teddy Roosevelt years, have come out the other end of the century intact despite the advent of Nintendo, co-education, acid rain, and the bad craziness of the anti-authoritarian 60s. Membership is somewhere in the four-million range; belief in God remains one of the criteria for joining. And vibrant still is the Kiplingesque spirit of Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the British soldier who established the first Boy Scouts in his home country in 1908, incorporating the American chapter two years later. Last summer, 30,000 Scouts, accompanied by 5,000 adult supervisors and representing some 750 troops across the United States, convened just outside Fredericksburg, Virginia, for the organization's quadrennial National Boy Scout Jamboree, held at Fort A. P. Hill, a facility named for the Confederate general whose charge began the Battle of Gettysburg. The theme: "Character Counts . . . Be Prepared for the 21st Century."

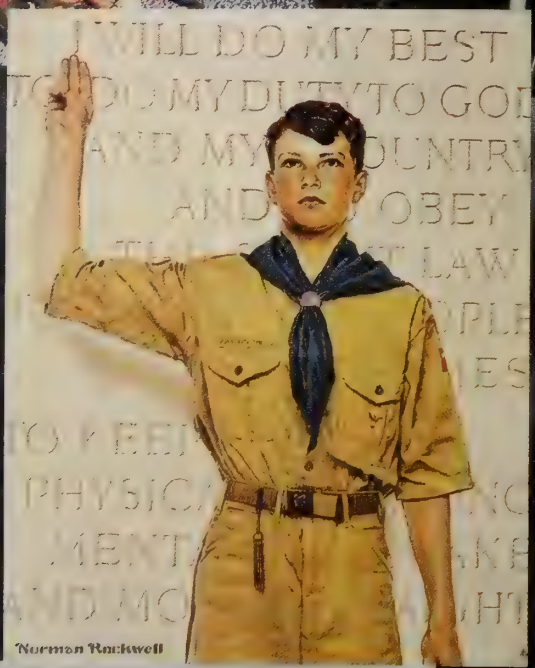
The Scouts have always seemed a perfect subject for the photographer Bruce Weber, whose visual vocabulary of blossomy cheeks, sun-streaked hair, and splintery Adirondack rusticity has been put to stirring use in ad campaigns and fashion portfolios. At the jamboree he got to take pictures of the real thing, no styling or overdubs. The results, some of which you see here and some of which are currently on display in "Bruce Weber: Branded Youth & Other Stories," a retrospective at the National Portrait Gallery in London, are remarkable for their warmth and flattery. To most contemporary photographers the word "Americana" is


Weber has
less in common with his
peers than with
Norman Rockwell.





Clockwise from above: thousands of Scouts wait patiently for President Clinton, who addressed them during the closing ceremonies; a young Scout studies for a merit badge; Aaron M. Robben of Troop 1427 in Kansas flashes the traditional Scout salute; Casey Scott of Troop 1530 in Virginia proves that Scouts no longer have to look like Beaver Cleaver; preparing their meal; Michael Siebert and David Schraeder of Troop 1426 in Kansas; Norman Rockwell's 1945 rendering of the quintessential Boy Scout.



















Clockwise from top left: a Scout shows off his catch from Fish Hook Lake, which was well stocked for the occasion; heeding the call to take on domestic chores, a Scout dries his laundry on a line; President Clinton greets Scouts after his speech; a 1956 Norman Rockwell poster; Tyler Pilger of Troop 1426 in Kansas takes a break between merit-badge classes.





reflexively preceded by the word "tacky"; it's all just one big kitsch pot, this country. Weber, though, shoots without contempt—the chubby kid offering up the three-fingered "Scout's honor" salute isn't a grotesque but an affirmation; ditto the troop-leader dads in olive kneesocks. In this regard Weber has less in common with his peers than he does with Norman Rockwell, whose Boy Scout portraits, as clean and earnest as W.P.A. posters, have stirred up patriotic shivers in lefties and Ross Perot alike.

Fort A. P. Hill was appropriately kitted up and celebrity-booked for the 10-day occasion. The boys, ranging in age from 12 to 18, brought their own tents and equipment. They wore uniforms weighted with merit badges in swimming, first aid, and cooking, not to mention those in the newer categories of climbing and crime prevention. (The outmoded individual badges for bee-keeping and rabbit raising have been consolidated under the broader rubric of animal science.) Fish Hook Lake was stocked with trout "to be sure the kids had a good experience," in the words of Gregg Shields, the Boy Scouts' national spokesman. Former Cub Scout President Clinton showed up, as did George Allen, the governor of Virginia, and Scott O'Grady, the military pilot whose real-life application of his Scout training—surviving on rainwater and ants for six days after his plane went down in Bosnia—won him international fame and the friendship of the Reagans a few years ago. Louise Mandrell, of the country-singing Mandrells, provided U.S.O.-style music and sauce for the boys.

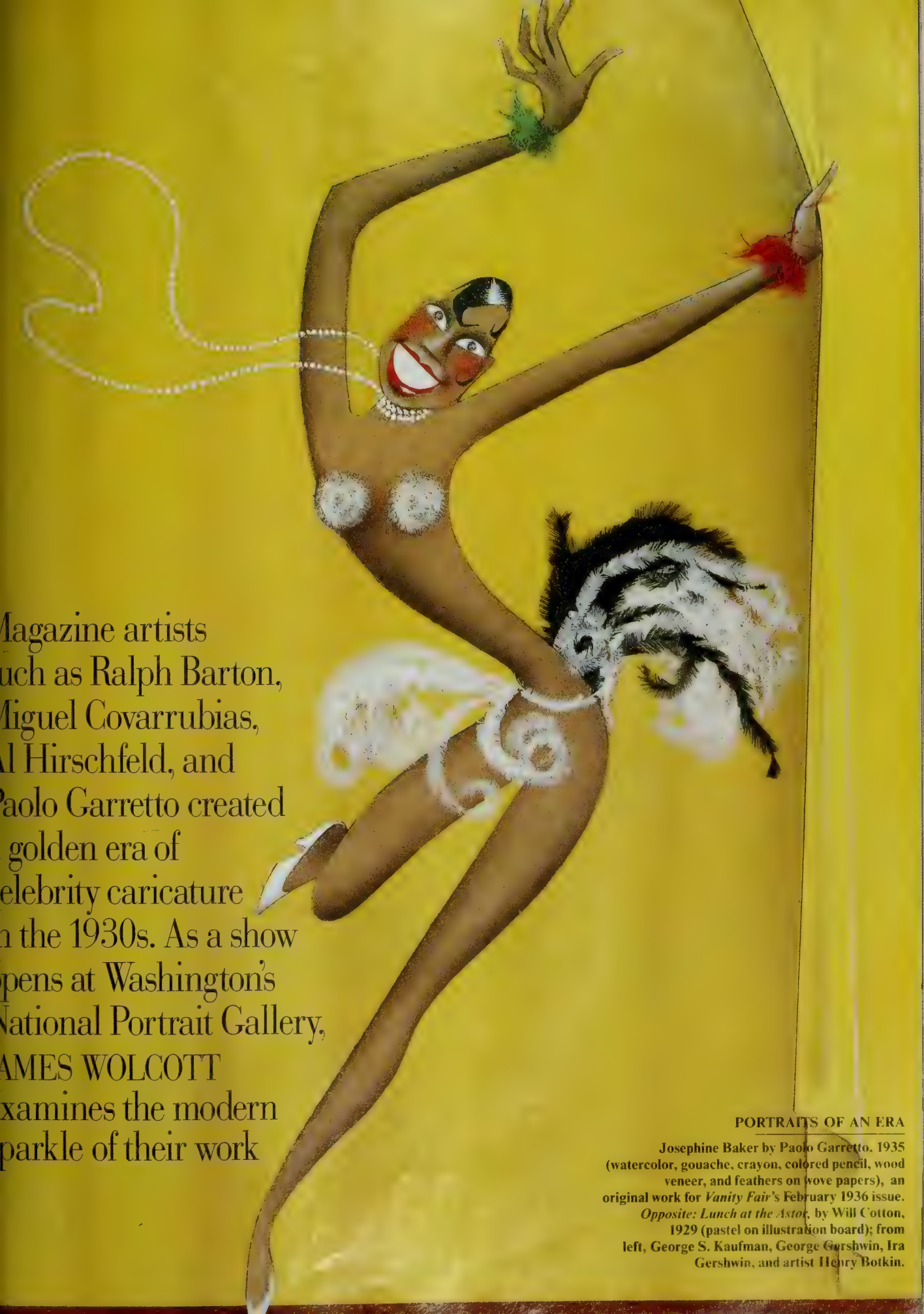
The colors were lowered for the last time at 7:15 P.M. on August 5. Taps followed three hours later, "all quiet" 15 minutes after that, and the next morning the sunburned troops boarded their buses for points north-, south-, and westward, the older ones contemplative, the younger ones anticipating reunions in 2001.

—DAVID KAMP


Belief in God remains one of the criteria
for joining the Scouts.
Troop 55
BSA
55

JAZZ AGE GIANTS





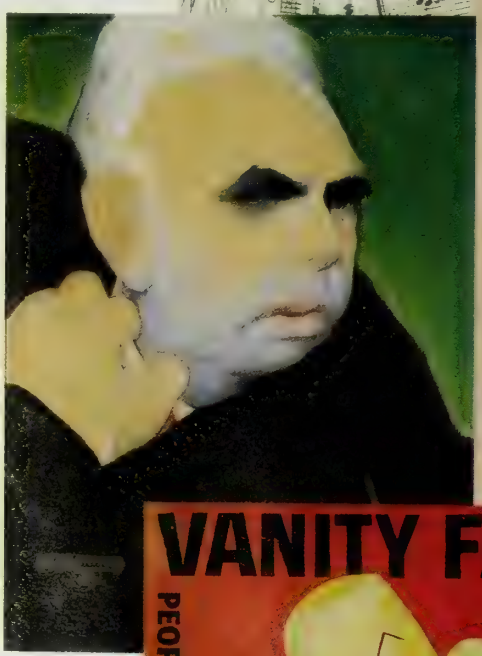
Magazine artists such as Ralph Barton, Miguel Covarrubias, Al Hirschfeld, and Paolo Garretto created a golden era of celebrity caricature in the 1930s. As a show opens at Washington's National Portrait Gallery, JAMES WOLCOTT examines the modern sparkle of their work

PORTRAITS OF AN ERA

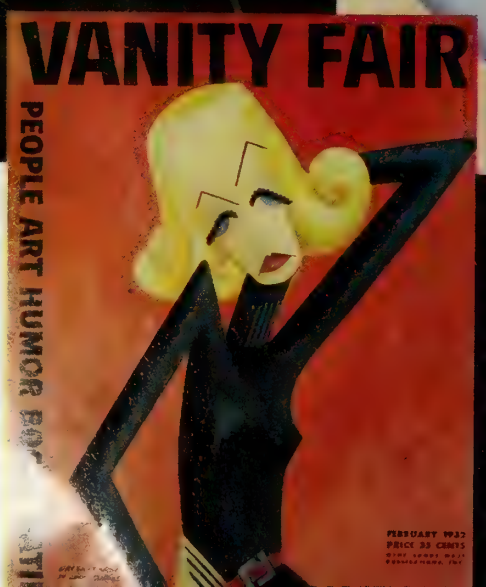
Josephine Baker by Paolo Garretto. 1935 (watercolor, gouache, crayon, colored pencil, wood veneer, and feathers on wove papers), an original work for *Vanity Fair*'s February 1936 issue. *Opposite: Lunch at the Astor*, by Will Cotton, 1929 (pastel on illustration board); from left, George S. Kaufman, George Gershwin, Ira Gershwin, and artist Henry Botkin.

The art of celebrity caricature reached its rainbow crest in the 30s, when most American writing was mired in a mood of prison gray. During and after the Depression, American fiction was proletarian in outlook, naturalistic in numbing detail, and hangdog in spirit, its plodding characters driven to extinction by economic determinism. (The Marxist school of criticism was even more leadfooted.) Not all eyes were cast downward, however. As writers wrestled with the fate of Collective Man, artists like Ralph Barton, Miguel Covarrubias, Will Cotton, Al Hirschfeld, and Paolo Garretto captured and celebrated the physiognomic individuality of the high and mighty in the pages of *Vanity Fair* and *The New Yorker.* The aristocracy of achievement had found its fun-house portraitists. Hemingway as Tarzan, Babe Ruth as a Moon Pie baseball, Mae West looking like a royal barge—even lampooned, celebrities remained larger than life, balloon-inflated. The playful accentuations and pixie-dust colors of the baubles on display in the National Portrait Gallery's exhibition "Celebrity Caricature in America"—opening in Washington, D.C., this April, with a tie-in book by the show's curator, Wendy Wick Reaves—reflect the heyday between the wars, when the glamour of Broadway lent luster to the Algonquin Round Table group, whose wisecracking wit in turn helped sharpen the tongue of the talkies. The period didn't last long, and yet how well it's lasted. What looked like the temporary sparkle of passing fancy possesses a vigor, focus, and streamlined attack that transcends nostalgia









FACE TIME

From top: **the Marx Brothers—Chico, Groucho, and Harpo—by Al Hirschfeld, 1935; George Herman "Babe" Ruth by Garretto, from the *New York World,* September 1929; Theodore Dreiser by Will Cotton, for the October 1931 issue of *Vanity Fair;* Miguel Covarrubias's Greta Garbo, for the cover of the February 1932 *Vanity Fair.* *Opposite:* Ernest Hemingway by Covarrubias, commissioned by *Vanity Fair* circa 1933 (gouache on paper).**


The aristocracy
of achievement
had found its
fun-house
portraitists.



STREETWISE

Taken in 1915, Paul Strand's classic photograph *Wall Street, New York* embodies the abstract style of the modernist avant-garde without sacrificing its journalistic human dimension. It feels completely contemporary.

Spotlight

SOUL OF A NEW MACHINE

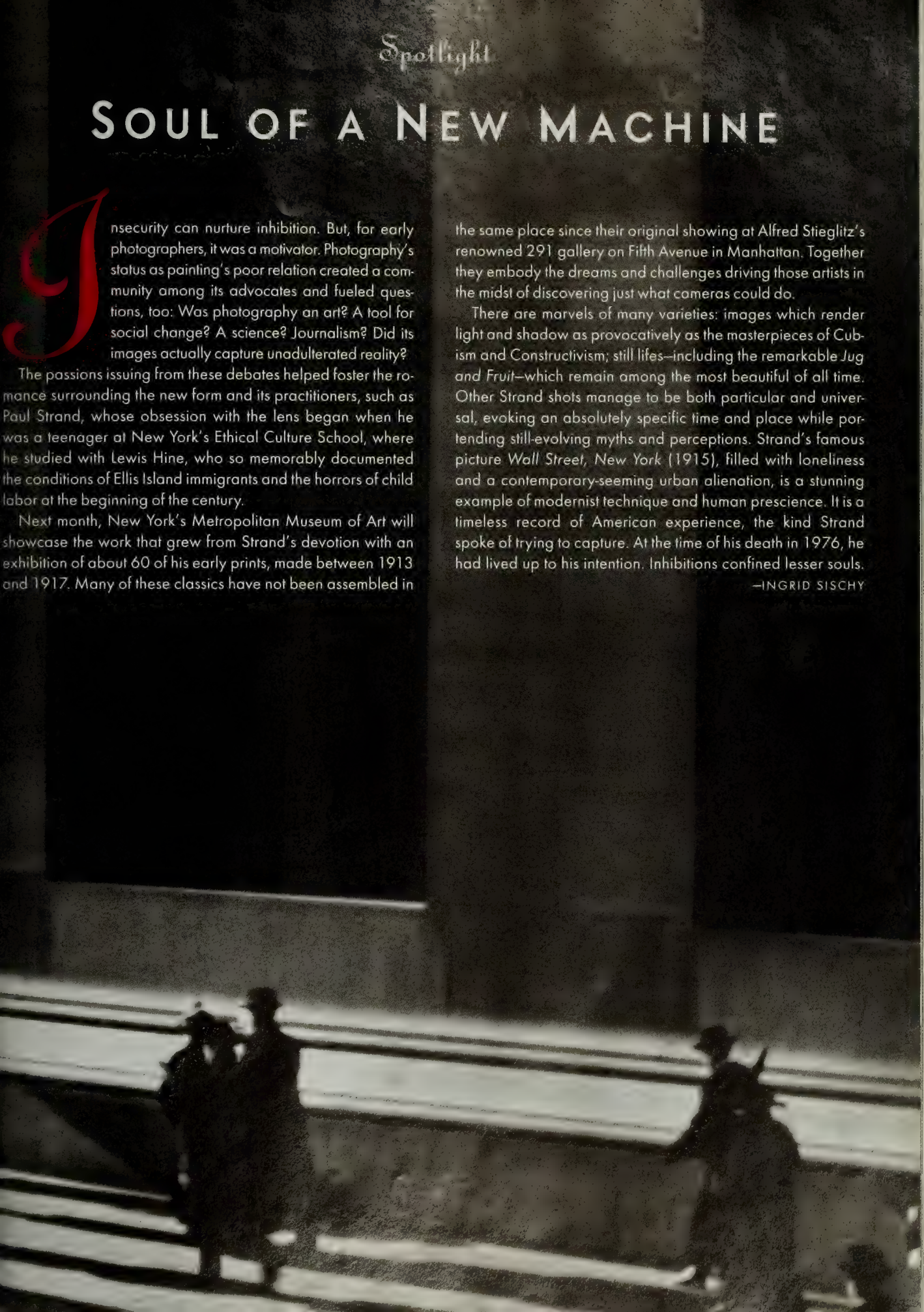
Insecurity can nurture inhibition. But, for early photographers, it was a motivator. Photography's status as painting's poor relation created a community among its advocates and fueled questions, too: Was photography an art? A tool for social change? A science? Journalism? Did its images actually capture unadulterated reality?

The passions issuing from these debates helped foster the romance surrounding the new form and its practitioners, such as Paul Strand, whose obsession with the lens began when he was a teenager at New York's Ethical Culture School, where he studied with Lewis Hine, who so memorably documented the conditions of Ellis Island immigrants and the horrors of child labor at the beginning of the century.

Next month, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art will showcase the work that grew from Strand's devotion with an exhibition of about 60 of his early prints, made between 1913 and 1917. Many of these classics have not been assembled in the same place since their original showing at Alfred Stieglitz's renowned 291 gallery on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. Together they embody the dreams and challenges driving those artists in the midst of discovering just what cameras could do.

There are marvels of many varieties: images which render light and shadow as provocatively as the masterpieces of Cubism and Constructivism; still lifes—including the remarkable *Jug and Fruit*—which remain among the most beautiful of all time. Other Strand shots manage to be both particular and universal, evoking an absolutely specific time and place while portending still-evolving myths and perceptions. Strand's famous picture *Wall Street, New York* (1915), filled with loneliness and a contemporary-seeming urban alienation, is a stunning example of modernist technique and human prescience. It is a timeless record of American experience, the kind Strand spoke of trying to capture. At the time of his death in 1976, he had lived up to his intention. Inhibitions confined lesser souls.

—INGRID SISCHY



LIGHT FANTASTIC

Keith McNally moved to New York in 1976 and went on to found, or co-found, a string of restaurants and clubs including Nell's, Cafe Luxembourg, the Odeon, Lucky Strike, Pravda, and his latest must-be-seen-at brasserie, Balthazar. The one thing he hasn't changed is his own address. MATT TYRNAUER finds the nonpareil restaurateur still ensconced in his very first apartment, where a SoHo tenement exterior belies the 19th-century glow of McNally magic within





HEALTHY GLOW Alcohol vats and warm light transform McNally's living space into a 19th-century-style domain, a combination of a Paris *plaisance* and a crumbling New England farmhouse. *Below:* the bathroom sink is a freestanding lavatory, and the antique mirror, which is from a pharmacy, was purchased at a New York salvage yard.



POT LUCK
From left: Keith McNally and his daughter Isabelle, aged eight, stand beneath a French pot rack, in front of the distressed-headboard cabinet in the kitchen; the sink was handmade by a friend, builder Ian McPheely, from pounded copper.



The city's new restaurant laws notwithstanding, Keith McNally is New York's most successful purveyor of rooms that appear smoke-filled. The Odeon, which he and his brother Brian helped launch in 1980, continues to attract the black-leather-and-sunglasses set—the artists, models, and aspirants who stalk through Manhattan's ever fashionable Tribeca neighborhood. Then there is Balthazar, McNally's newest creation, which is so popular that patrons should book now for Memorial Day. But despite all of his success, McNally has not sunk his lunch money into the kind of apartment that big-name people engage the disciples of Sister Parish and Le Corbusier to conceptualize. He has, in fact, lived in the same red-brick tenement building on the quiet western edge of SoHo for 20 years now, ever since the days when he was employed as an oyster shucker at the now defunct restaurant One Fifth.

"I moved into my apartment in 1976 or '77. When did Elvis die? I moved in that year," says McNally. A boyish 46, he is handsome enough to be an actor—which he was as a teenager in London, where he appeared with John Gielgud in the West End production of Alan Bennett's play *Forty Years On* in 1968. Yet he was ambivalent about an acting career and headed to New York. "I've held on to this place because I was told when I moved to New York you should always keep your first apartment. And while I've considered moving, and looked at other apartments, nothing ever seems as nice as this one."

To reach McNally's fanciful 1,100-square-foot, six-room hideaway, you



KEITH'S LAIR
From left: London Blitz–era [illegible] hang above the sofa; in the study are shelves lined with art and photography books.







BEDTIME STORIES
From left: the bunk beds for McNally's children Harry and Isabelle were copied from sailors' berths on a 19th-century ship; Sophie's room features a headboard ceiling.

must face four flights of fluorescent-lit, rubber-treaded stairs. "There used to be a lot of rats outside," he admits, "but I haven't seen them for a while."

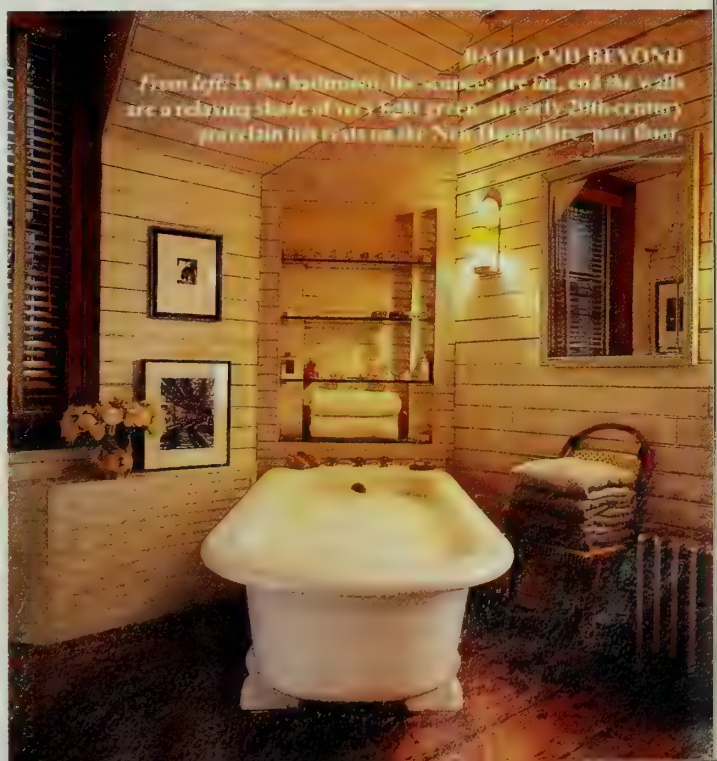
In no way does the drabness of the climb to apartment No. 25 prepare you for the gold-hued, Parisian-inspired charms of McNally's space, which he designed himself over the last 20 years. (He has also designed or helped create all of the restaurants and clubs he has been involved in.) "I'm a very bad drawer," he declares in his East End staccato. "I draw on napkins, and then I discuss it with someone, and then we build it. I'm very insecure, but I get so caught up in the details. For a restaurant I'll ask the postman what he thinks of the zinc bar. For this apartment I drag in the guy who's out in the hall slipping Chinese menus under the door and ask him if he thinks it works."

In addition to Balthazar, McNally owns the downtown Russian Constructivist–inspired supper club Pravda (its bar is managed by his brother Peter), and the SoHo bistro Lucky Strike, which looks like a Paris restaurant in a 1930s Brassaï photograph. (In the 1980s he helped start, but is no longer associated with, the club Nell's and Cafe Luxembourg, on the Upper West Side.) Anyone who has set foot in these establishments will immediately recognize the strong, consistent McNally aesthetic.

Rule one: Everything, to paraphrase Noël Coward, is a question of lighting.

"I think that there has to be some sort of warmth to the light, but I don't like it to be precious," McNally tells me one afternoon while sitting in the amber glow of Balthazar's dining room, a 4,000-square-foot, wood-





BATH AND BEYOND
From left: in the bathroom, the sconces are tin, and the walls are a relaxing shade of very pale green; an early-20th-century porcelain tub rests on the New Hampshire pine floor.


HOME STYLE
A time crate to live up—like those at McNally's first SoHo bistro, Lucky Strike—serves as the centerpiece for the kitchen.



paneled homage to a Paris train-station brasserie. (During our interview he inspects the evening's reservation list, on which the names Sean Connery, Giorgio Armani, Spike Lee, and Minnie Driver are scrawled.) "I like lighting to reflect off the wood, and I glaze the walls—I don't use paint—with a mixture of pigment and decorator's glaze, several layers of it. Then a coat of varnish that gives it the slightly nicotined appearance, and I think the light reflecting off that is beautiful," he says.

The nicotined-wall effect of Balthazar is something that McNally (who is a nonsmoker) perfected in his living room and kitchen—areas "ruined" by modern white latex paint before he moved in and began transforming them back into 19th-century-style spaces. Indeed, inside McNally's lair, it's hard to tell what decade it is. Here, all of contemporary Manhattan's carbuncles have been cleverly obliterated or ingeniously obscured: aluminum-frame Thermopane windows are masked by wooden venetian blinds; a subpar wooden floor has been covered by ancient pine planks from a New England scrapyard. There is no shower, only a huge early-20th-century porcelain tub. And, recently, McNally replaced his standard kitchen sink with one of riveted, pounded copper. The effect is a harmonious fusion of Paris pied-à-terre, Wallace and Gromit flat, and New England farmhouse—with a bit of "*film noir*" thrown in.

"I like imperfections and layers," says McNally, standing in his sizable kitchen, leaning against a distressed-beadboard cabinet that hides his dishwasher. "I'd rather make things asymmetrical than make them perfect and make them look like they were designed. I don't like taste and I don't like design."

Yet, he will freely admit that the effort behind an "undesigned" appearance can be monumental. For instance, the bathroom's sloping "faux garret" ceiling is made of pine boards with painstakingly chiseled grooves. "These boards are worked to look uneven, but they are made of new material," he says, running his hand over one of them. "Of course, that presents a danger. It could look theatrical—and it CONTINUED ON PAGE 171

MORRISON'S TRUE WEST

"O-KE-lahoma, where the wind comes sweeping down the plain . . . " Hold it *right* there, says Toni Morrison, America's latest Nobel laureate in literature. The former Dust Bowl state, so recently the scene of Timothy McVeigh's militia fascism, was even before that the place "where America first bombed its own citizens from the air." That was in Tulsa, in the embattled black section of town, in 1921. The gritty, nonfiction Oklahoma is the setting for her new novel (her seventh), sardonically entitled *Paradise*. So far from being the bucolic Utopia of Rodgers and Hammerstein, it was the land of heartbreak for the free black citizens who voyaged there, post-Reconstruction, to set up 26 all-black towns. "That's Paradise in some of our minds," Morrison says, "and we can always pick it up again, defined not by Dante or Milton but by real estate—and with nobody else on the property."

One person's dream of separatism and purity is another's nightmare, and *Paradise* deals with the panic evoked when either women or African-Americans attempt to go it alone. "I was looking at the book of photographs *Ghost Towns of Oklahoma*, and it scarcely mentions any of the black ones," says Morrison with a laugh, "but it did include one that was all female. I think it lasted about eight months at the turn of the century." Out of these speculations and imaginings has come her haunted burg, lovingly named Ruby. The town features a convent made out of a "converted" cathouse, and calamitous are the stories of the women seeking refuge in its precincts.

Oklahoma is the birthplace of Ralph Ellison. You could say that Toni Morrison has sought to restore to visibility the people who [illegible] of the cowboy and oilman narrative. "The [illegible] and regret of the West have been [illegible] Here are two versions of [illegible] can be all you can be."



TONI MORRISON

The Nobel Prize winner's new novel, *Paradise*—set in rural Oklahoma—will be published by Knopf this month.

The Outlaw

In just 126 seconds, on September 25, 1962, at Chicago's Comiskey Park, Charles "Sonny" Liston took the title of world heavyweight boxing champion from Floyd Patterson. He seemed unconquerable. Then, after a stunning reign, Liston lost his title to the young mouth from Louisville, Cassius Clay. Excavating a dark legend, NICK TOSCHES investigates Liston's violent life, his seduction by the Mob as he fought his way to the top, and his mysterious death 27 years ago in Las Vegas



Champ

SON DOWN

Opposite, in September 1963, hours before this photo, Liston had a spat with a British boxing official at a club in Leicester, England. *Above*, in May 1965 in Maine, Liston took a second shot at Muhammad Ali after Robert Goulet (left) sang. Liston lost, or threw, the fight. *Inset*, a ticket for a Liston-Patterson bout, originally scheduled for Miami Beach.



PHOTOGRAPH BY NEIL LEIFER

The corpse was rolled over and laid facedown on the metal. It was then that the coroner saw them: copper-colored whipping welts so faint and ancient that they might have been those of a driven slave.

To say that Charles Liston was indeed a slave would be to render cheap metaphor of the man. And yet, Liston—the most formidable, the most unconquerable of heavyweights—had been enslaved by forces as brute as the lash: enslaved, conquered, and killed.

Born with dead-man's eyes, he passed from the hell where his scars were inflicted, through an underworld of streaming sweat and neon, to that anonymous slab. There on that black winter night, the myth of Liston—which, for 27 years, has lain like a viper coiled deep in our heads—began.

I remember the figure of Sonny Liston from my boyhood: those narrow-lapelled sharkskin suits, that right hook, the scowl. It strikes me as odd, looking back, that a black man could have held such allure for a white kid like me. It may have had to do with the fact that Sonny—as he had, surprisingly, come to be known—was as feared by blacks as by whites. He was pure outlaw, so far from safety that no one could reach him. His badness made race a trivial concern.

Maybe that is why, in this debased age, when gangster affectations have become middle-class commodities, Liston is rousing punks once more. "This bitch talks a game harder than Sonny Liston hits," growls the [illegible] jazz-rap poet-singer Toledo in "Do[illegible] town," and in "Triumph [illegible] Clan invokes the champ's unholy name like a spirit from a vanished time. Just as the forbidding reality of him transcended color, so has his current, unexpected renaissance: Holy Hand Grenade, three white boys from Philly, have a song named after him on their debut album. A piece of effete fiction in *The New Yorker* bears the title "Sonny Liston Was a Friend of Mine."

He was no friend of mine. But as the years passed and I learned more about the fights, and saw more boxers hit, I realized that there was no other like Liston. There never had been. There never would be. And the more I observed, the more I sensed that his secret history would reveal one of the great Mob stories, a hard-luck tale that segued into a murder mystery whose solution seemed as lost as whatever those dead-man's eyes took in before they closed for good.

A guy who knew Sonny once said, "I think he died the day he was born." But no one knows when that was. His life began and ended in a blur. Only the men who killed him knew the date of his death: his corpse had been waiting a while by the time it was found. And nobody knew exactly when or where he was born.

He was among the youngest of a brood of 25 who knew a common father but different mothers. That father was a tenant cotton farmer named Tobey Liston, and the mother who bore Charles was Helen Baskin, who had another son, E. B. Ward, from a previous union. Tobey and Helen had moved to Arkansas together, from Mississippi, in 1916, when he was 50 and she was 16.

After the world came to know him as Sonny, Liston would often say that he had been born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. He would also tell you that he was born in Little Rock, and on one legal document, he stated his birthplace as Memphis, Tennessee.

His mother would say that her son claimed Pine Bluff because "his manager told him to give a big town," Pine Bluff was bigger than Forwhere, according to her, he was brought into this world. "He was never in Pine Bluff," she would say, "and I never been there, either."

Helen remembered the house where he was born as a cypress-board shack. "It had no ceiling. I had to put cardboard on the walls to try to keep the wind out." He was given the name Charles L. Liston, not by her or by his father, but by the "old woman who delivered him." If the "L" stood for anything, she never told, or no one recalled. He was, Helen said, the 9th of the 10 children she bore Tobey. "I noticed his big hands when the mid-lady brought him to me," Helen said.

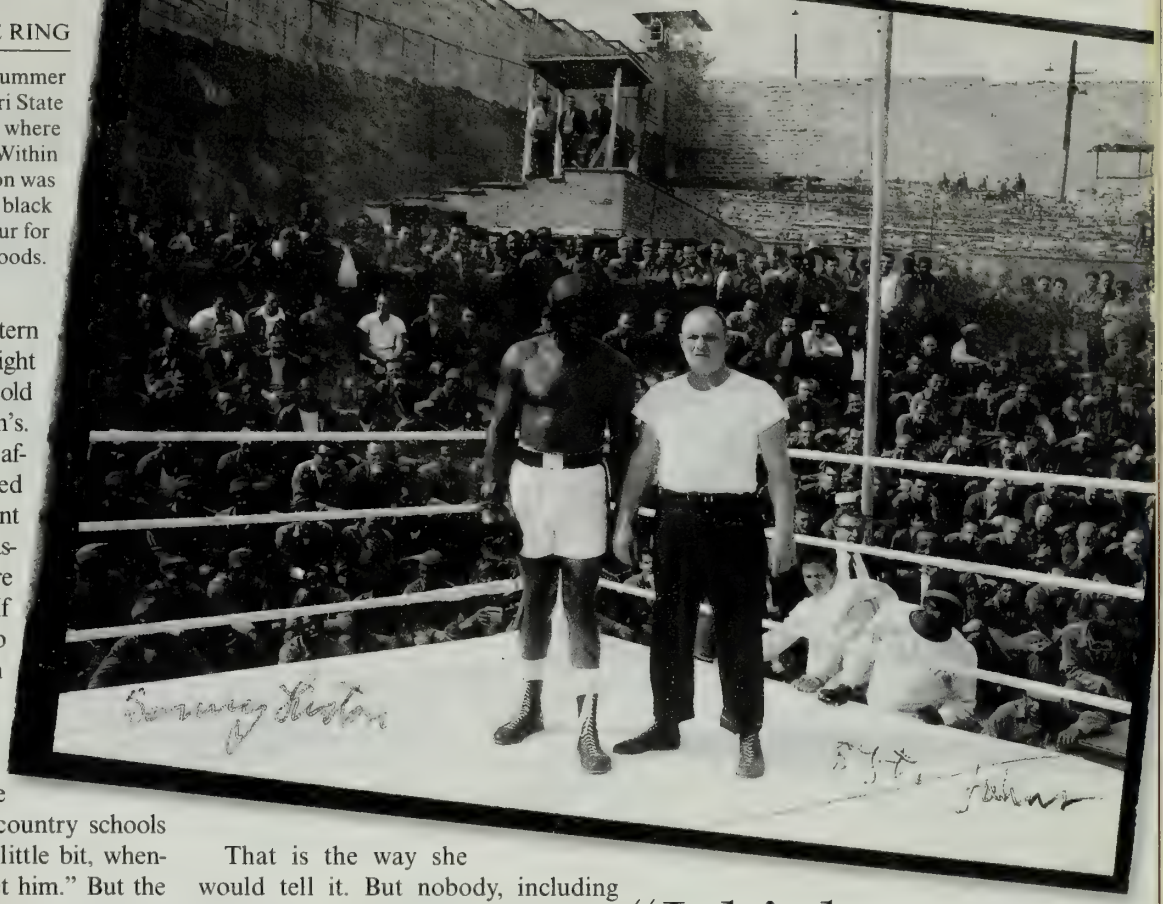
The truth seems to be that Charles L. Liston was born some 17 miles northeast of Forrest City, in St. Francis County, in the rural community of Sand Slough, a part of the 1,800-acre Morledge Plantation, where Tobey worked the fields and where Helen was known as Big Hela.

As to his date of birth, at least half a dozen have been set forth. Liston himself—who in 1950 gave his age as 22, and in 1953 gave it as 21—finally settled on May 8, 1932, saying that anybody who doubted it "is callin' my momma a liar." After her son chose this date, his mother insisted on another—January 8, 1932. This day, she said, had been duly recorded in an old family Bible, but the Bible, she added, had been lost somewhere along the way. At times, she gave her version as January 18. "I know he was born in January," she said. "It was cold in January."

In Arkansas, countless bodies of water left by the shifting courses of rivers and streams have borne the name of Horseshoe Lake. The Listons' shack was situated on one, and Sonny loved to swim, and to ride his mule, Ada. The son of George Morledge, who owned the plantation where Tobey sharecropped his 50 acres, remembered Charles as "overgrown, never too bright, and pretty much of a loner."

Writing in 1963—some months after Liston became the heavyweight champion of the world, some months before the March on Washington, which led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964—a local reporter observed, "The average eastern-Arkansas Negro is still virtually a slave, and was even worse off during the Depression days."

Charles Liston was a child of those



Right, Liston in the summer of 1952 at the Missouri State ·nitentiary in Jefferson City, where he became a boxer. Within months of his release, Liston was ·portedly moonlighting in a black Cadillac as a chauffeur for St. Louis hoods.

Depression days in eastern Arkansas, the son of a slight man whose scowl was as cold and cruel as any boss man's. To Tobey, born a year after the Civil War ended and the 13th Amendment abolished slavery, the passel of children he bred were beastlings of burden. If they were big enough to go to the table, Helen remembered him saying, they were big enough to go to the fields.

She recalled a couple of vanished one-room country schools where Charles "went a little bit, whenever his daddy would let him." But the boy never learned to read or write, and by the time he was eight, Tobey had him laboring full-time. "All I ever got from my old man," Sonny would say, "was a beating."

That was about all he would ever say of his childhood, but his words spoke of wounds beneath his copper-colored welts, memories that left him as hurtful as he was hurt, as deadly as he was deadened. The soul beneath his layers of scar tissue was to others hidden and unknowable.

Sonny, his mother said, "was a good, obedient boy" who "never give me any trouble, never." He was "big and strong."

Helen left the plantation and her family during World War II, when assembly lines beckoned with the dollars of wartime prosperity. She found a job at a St. Louis shoe factory. In time, Charles fled Arkansas as well. Gathering wild pecans and selling them to buy a one-way bus ticket, he went to St. Louis in search of his mother. He arrived in the dead of night. Some cops found him, lost and wandering, and took him to a café. Somebody there knew where Helen lived, and the cops got him there.

"I say, 'Sonny, why you come here?' And he say, 'Mama, I got tired of that cotton patch.'"

That is the way she would tell it. But nobody, including her, knew him as Sonny back then. That name did not come until later, after other cops delivered him to another place.

"I think Sonny Liston died the day he was born."

He claimed that he tried to go to school in St. Louis, but said the kids in the elementary class shamed him, laughed at him, because he was so much bigger than they were. He was like a grown man from the backwoods set among them to learn to read and write. His mother swore that he held jobs, at a poultry-packing plant, at an icehouse. But the earliest documentary evidence of the existence of Charles Liston shows no sign of school, no sign of dead chickens.

By the winter of 1949, Liston had fallen in with another, younger Arkansas native, Willie Jordan, who lived on North 10th Street, not far from 1006 O'Fallon Street, where Liston and his mother lived. A third cohort, whom they knew only as James, also hung with them.

The St. Louis police first became aware of them on the fifth night after Christmas of 1949, when a young clerk, Anthony Bommarito, reported that he had been robbed by three black men on Biddle Street, in the Mississippi waterfront area where the downtown black and Italian neighborhoods merged. The Description of Persons Wanted, on the second page of Complaint No. 94710, lists the offenders, beginning with "#1 Negro" and reducing the others to just numbers and ditto marks.

Three evenings later, on January 2, 1950, Antonio Tocco, a 59-year-old Italian immigrant, had just closed his vegetable store on North Seventh Street when, according to the police report, "three Negro men threw dirt in his face, and then beat him and dragged him into the alley where they knocked him down and kicked him." The take was nine dollars in ones.

On the evening of January 13, an 18-

Of Floyd Patterson, Liston said simply, "I'll kill him."



SONNY SIDEUP

Liston psyched himself up to fight world heavyweight champ Floyd Patterson by listening to "Night Train" performed by James Brown's Famous Flames. After Liston quick-stopped Patterson in the first round, he said, "I'm not a bad person. I'm just a bad fighter."



year-old white dockhand was approached by "three negroes" while walking near his home on North Eighth. "The #1 Negro struck him in the mouth knocking him to the street," whereupon "all three negroes held him down" and robbed him. The take: six dollars in folding money, a buck fifty in change.

Later that night, at a joint on O'Fallon, down the street from his mother's place, Liston, the "#1 Negro," was drinking with his cohorts and a Louisiana man named Sterling Belt. According to Liston's subsequent statement, Willie Jordan suggested that they could pull down some easy money by robbing the night attendant at the Wedge Filling Station at O'Fallon and North Broadway. Belt, who had a 1948 Mercury sedan, agreed to drive.

Arriving round midnight, the three men looked through the rear window of the station and found the attendant alone. A drunken soldier in uniform walked haplessly their way. From behind, Liston took him with a right-arm stranglehold. Jordan went through his pockets. They found one nickel, which they took, then sent him on.

Liston, Jordan, and James then entered the station. Jordan told the attendant that he wanted a can of gas. When the man turned to get it, Liston took him from behind while James went through his pockets and Jordan removed the money changer from his belt. They ran to the waiting Mercury and drove to Ninth and O'Fallon, where they divided the money: about 10 bucks each for Liston, Jordan, and James; 3 bucks for Belt. Liston bought whiskey, and they drove in the early-morning blackness across the river to East St. Louis, Illinois.

The next night, Liston met Jordan and Belt again at the bar on O'Fallon. Belt had a gun this time, and according to police reports, Jordan suggested looking for "a likable place of business to hold up." Driving west on Market Street, they came upon the Unique Cafe, where the counterman was alone. Again, Belt stayed in the car. Liston took the gun, shoved it into his own pocket, and entered the diner with Jordan. When Liston pulled the gun, Jordan grabbed it, pointed it toward the counterman, and announced, "This is a holdup." They came away with $23 in paper money, $14 in coins. This time, Belt's cut was doubled to six bucks.

The cop who collared Liston was 24-year-old Patrolman David Herleth of the Fourth District. "Now, here's about four, five, six jobs," he told me, looking back, "and the guy"—he was talking about Liston—"wore the same clothes all the time. Dumb street kid. Yellow-and-black checked shirt. He got the name of the Yellow Shirt Bandit."

Herleth caught Liston on the cold, rainy night of the Market Street robbery. It was sometime after one o'clock on the morning of January 15, and the policeman was staked out close to the bar on O'Fallon. "I don't remember whether a car stopped or what, but he come runnin' over from this rib station towards his house. I put a .38 on him, said, 'Whoa, hold it,' all that good stuff, 'hands against the wall.' Shook him down. No weapon, but he had rolls of nickels in the hammer pocket of his overalls—he was wearing bib-type overalls and this yellow shirt."

Police reports of January 15 and 16 recount Liston's responses to questioning. "I won't go into how they talked to him," Herleth said, but in the course of his confession, Liston ratted out his accomplices.

Headlined MAN CAUGHT 25 MINUTES AFTER $37 CAFE HOLDUP and describing him as "a bandit," a small item in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* of January 16 gave "Charles Liston, 22, Negro," his first notice in the press.

Pleading guilty on all counts to multiple charges of robbery and larceny, Liston was sentenced in May to five years at the Missouri State Penitentiary in Jefferson City. Upon entering prison, on June 12, he stated his place of residence to be Lynn, Arkansas; his age, 20.

"I'm not sure how he happened to get into so much trouble," Helen Liston would say. "You know, it's sometimes the company you keep which run your luck into a bad string. He was just a country boy. He didn't know to do nothing." She simply could not understand. He had, after all, taken religion down home. "I heard him confess. I used to tell him he had to cultivate his religion. He said he would."

By the time her son got out of the

joint, Helen was gone again, off to Gary, Indiana. She and Charles were never to see much of each other from then on. And by the time he got out of prison, Charles was a boxer named Sonny.

Although many have taken credit for it, no one knows who in prison gave Liston the nickname of Sonny. But the man who first put gloves on his fists was the Reverend Edward B. Schlattmann.

"The Catholic chaplain," Schlattmann explained to me, "was also director of athletics. No extra pay, of course." Retired and in his 89th year when we spoke last summer, Father Schlattmann clearly recalled Liston's arrival at the Missouri State Penitentiary in the summer of 1950.

"He was a big, husky guy and always getting in fights with other men." Like other inmates with the tendency to brawl, the new arrival was put into the main-yard ring by Father Schlattmann. "After four weeks of fighting, nobody in the penitentiary would get into the ring with Sonny."

When Schlattmann was transferred, his place was taken by Father Alois Stevens, who had been chaplain at Algoa, an intermediate reformatory nearby. The Reverend Jack McGuire, then an assistant at the Jefferson City parish, remembered Stevens mentioning Sonny: "He told me that there was this great big monstrous convict. . . . They had to put two men in the ring with him at the same time."

Stevens told McGuire that he thought Liston "could have a very successful career as a pro boxer, but they couldn't get him paroled, because he couldn't even sign his name," and they would never be able to line up a job for him.

Father McGuire had gone to the seminary "a little late." Though he was only 28, he had been a sportswriter for the St. Louis *Star-Times*. He knew Bob Burnes, the sports editor of the *Globe-Democrat*. Burnes called Monroe "Munsey" Harrison, a former boxer who had become a coach and trainer. Harrison went to Jefferson City on February 9, 1[illegible], to meet with William [illegible]

Sonny's trainer was a fellow inmate, Sam Eveland, a young 1950 Golden Gloves champ. Eveland remembered Harrison and Anderson as "short, heavy-set black people. Good people." And he remembered Liston fighting Wilson, who is said to have gone two rounds, then called it quits with the words "I don't want no more of him."

"A good kid," Eveland said when asked what Sonny was like back then. "Yeah, he was an animal, all right. He was still a kid, though. He had a good heart."

Tough-faced Sam showed me an old Christmas card from Sonny, the three-cent stamp on its envelope postmarked Philadelphia, December 8, 1961. He also dragged out a note from around that time: Sonny had learned to write his name longhand, and he wanted Sam to have his first autograph. "Poor Sonny," Sam said. "Poor kid."

On the night of February 22, 1951, Harrison rushed into Burnes's office. "He was breathless," Burnes wrote. "You finally found me a live one," Harrison told him.

It was Burnes's hope that Munsey Harrison would become Liston's manager. But Harrison knew that he could not do it alone. Though respected as a trainer—he was Joe Louis's favorite sparring partner and taught Archie Moore his great "turtle defense"—he worked as a school custodian to make ends meet. He knew that he lacked the capital to manage properly a fighter of Liston's astounding potential.

So he turned to Frank W. Mitchell, heir to the *St. Louis Argus,* the oldest of the weeklies serving the local black community. No stranger to boxing, Mitchell already maintained a stable of several fighters.

With Father Stevens and Bob Burnes, Harrison and Mitchell campaigned for Liston's release. Meeting with the parole-board officer, Mitchell promised that Sonny would have a job and proper training as a boxer.

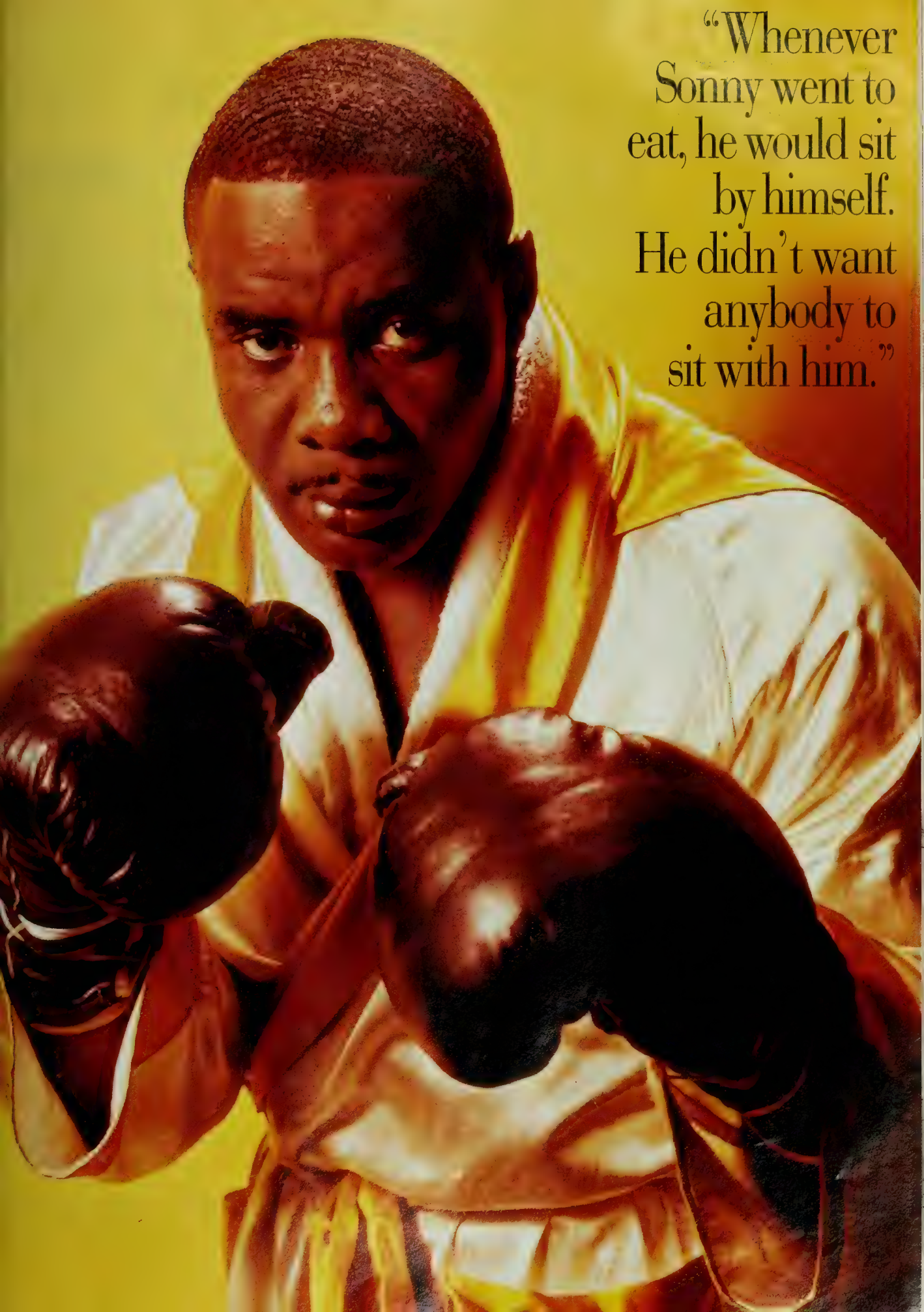
Liston was paroled to Mitchell and Harrison on Halloween 1952. After Mitchell got him a job as a laborer and a room at the Pine Street Y.M.C.A., Liston's training began. And something else began when he heard his song. The next March, tenor saxophonist Jim-





HO, HO, BABY

Left, *Esquire* unfurled Liston for Christmas in 1963; *below,* the previous December, Liston and his wife, Geraldine, had moved into a rented house on Chicago's South Side; *opposite*, Liston at training camp in South Fallsburg, N.Y., in July 1962.


"Whenever
Sonny went to
eat, he would sit
by himself.
He didn't want
anybody to
sit with him."

"White people wanted Liston to . . . kill Clay," said Elijah Muhammad. "Allah and myself said no."



IN MIAMI FOR THE BIG ONE

All suited up, Sonny Liston arrives in Miami in January 1964 to prepare to defend his heavyweight title against Cassius Clay. Liston shakes with promoter Bill MacDonald and is flanked by his manager, Jack Nilon (far left).

my Forrest, a 32-year-old son of St. Louis, broke the R&B charts wide open with a brooding siren's tune, a wordless evocation—slow and wild at once of vague and dangerous beauty. It was called "Night Train," and Sonny Liston would play it again and again, at every workout. It became the soundtrack of his every blow and heartbeat, until the very end. He had always been on that night train, had been born to it. And now, though released to the dream of a golden new morning, he was about to enter its darkest tunnel.

They wanted to get Sonny into the Golden Gloves. There was no age restriction, but legal proof of age, any age, was required. In Arkansas in those days, an affidavit from an older family member sufficed to establish a record of birth. And so it was. in January 1953, that Sonny Liston came to be born on May 8, 1932, and so it was that Liston. [illegible] been 22 in January [illegible] June of 1950, turned [illegible] in the spring of 1952.

Sonny had not yet achieved r[illegible] refinement of style. He did not finesse his opponents; he simply obliterated them, usually without using his right fist. "He had absolutely no right hand at all at this time," recalled Jim Lubbock, a *Globe-Democrat* reporter. "But he had a left like a pile driver."

That February, Liston swept the competition in the open and novice heavyweight division of the *Globe*'s 18th annual Golden Gloves tournament. Then, joining other local winners in Chicago, he took the Midwest Golden Gloves heavyweight title from Olympic champion Ed Sanders. At the national matches, in March, Liston became the Golden Gloves heavyweight champion of America. In June, wiping out Herman Schreibauer of West Germany in less than a round, Liston became the International Golden Gloves champion as well. By then his right fist was less idle. It was a single blow of that right that felled Schreibauer.

In four months, Liston had risen to [illegible] top of the amateur standings, and [illegible] ed that there was a man whom he could not take down. GLOVES KING LISTON READY TO TURN PRO, declared the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* after the Schreibauer fight.

Liston's contract with Harrison and Mitchell granted them half his purses in exchange for all his expenses. The managers discovered, however, that it was difficult to find willing opponents, and when they did, winnings were small. The first fight they lined up was against Don Smith, a newcomer out of Louisville who had won his two previous matches with impressive early-round knockouts. The Liston-Smith fight—held in St. Louis on September 2, 1953—ended in a knockout by Liston with the first punch of the first round. By the spring of 1954, Liston had fought four fights, all in St. Louis, all victories. His first out-of-town fight, on June 29, 1954, was a televised match in Detroit against John Summerlin, a veteran from Michigan who had lost only once in his 22-

fight career. Liston entered the ring at the Motor City Arena an underdog, and walked out a winner. Six weeks later, in a rematch at the same ring, Liston won again.

When Liston lost in September to Marty Marshall, a lesser Michigan heavyweight, it was to be the only loss during his climb to glory—the story circulated that Liston, never having seen anyone he knocked down get back up, was so bewildered when Marshall rose from a first-round knockdown that Marshall caught him unawares with a punch that dislocated his jaw. The truth is that the punch that fractured Liston's jaw came three rounds later. Liston, busted jaw and all, lost only by a close decision after the full eight rounds. He went on to fight Marshall again, twice in the next 18 months, and he beat him on both occasions.

By the time Liston was fighting out of town, Mitchell was his sole manager. "I was committed to paying $35 a week for Sonny's support," Harrison would explain, "and my wife got sick and I just couldn't afford it. I had to turn my share of the contract over to Mitchell." Harrison spoke these words at a time when Liston was the heavyweight champion of the world and he himself was still a school custodian. "Let's face it," he added, "a poor, colored trainer just don't ever wind up with 50 percent of a heavyweight champion's contract."

When Harrison died, Bob Burnes, eulogizing him, told a different tale. "There came a time," Burnes would write, "when Monroe Harrison came into the office on a Tuesday afternoon." Harrison's demeanor "surprised me because I knew that Sonny had won the night before in Chicago, but that's all I knew."

"They took Sonny," Harrison said, according to Burnes.

"Who did?"

"Two guys touched me on the shoulder during the sixth round," Burnes claimed Harrison told him. "They said, 'We're taking Sonny,' and I said, 'When?' and they said, 'Right now.'"

"That was the beginning," Burnes would write, "of the takeover of Sonny Liston by the mob."

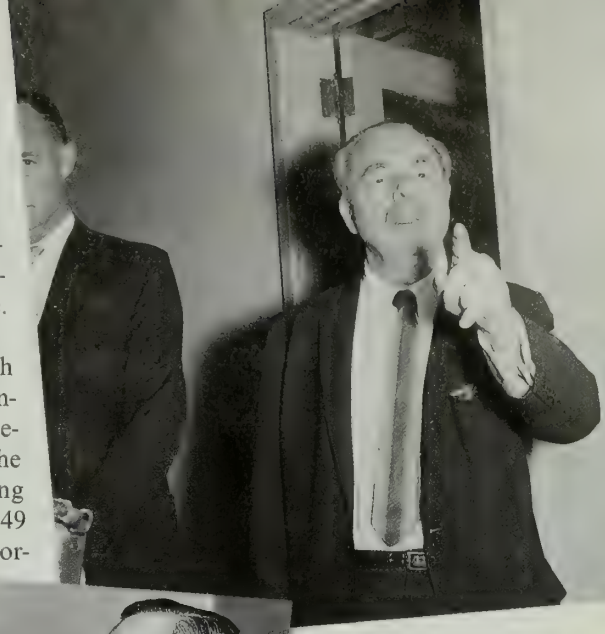
But Liston never fought in Chicago on a Monday night. He never fought there at all until 1958, after his association with Harrison had ended. Burnes's tale would be accepted. But Liston's takeover had begun long before.

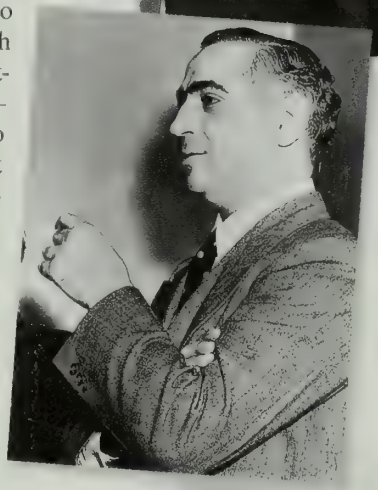
Frank Mitchell—pillar of the black community—was, in his management of Liston, a front man for the interests of one John J. Vitale.

In the days of which we speak, professional boxing was largely the domain of the International Boxing Club, formed in 1949 by James Dougan Norris, a Chicago sportsman who—with his father and a partner, Arthur Wirtz—owned the Chicago Stadium, the Detroit Olympia, the St. Louis Arena, and stock in Madison Square Garden. Although Norris bankrolled the I.B.C. and was its president, the corporation was masterminded by Truman K. Gibson Jr., a Chicago attorney whose involvement in boxing came through his friend heavyweight champion Joe Louis.

Born in 1914 on an Alabama cotton plantation and raised in Detroit, Louis had been the first black champion since Jack Johnson lost to Jess Willard in 1915. Successfully defending his title a record 25 times in an unprecedented reign from 1937 to 1949, Louis (described by one writer as a fighter with "murder in his heart and thunderbolts in his gloves") was perhaps the only hero that Sonny Liston ever had.

Gibson, a black southerner, attended the University of Chicago and was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1935 and to the bar of the state supreme court in 1939. He met Louis during World War II when, as an aide to Secretary





IN SONNY'S CORNER

From top: Frank "Blinky" Palermo after a 1959 arrest. Frank Carbo, a killer among killers, had pals in the International Boxing Club. Willie Reddish, Liston's trainer. Liston and his trusted manager Joseph "Pep" Barone in Seattle, 1960. Barney Baker, labor's feared enforcer, with Teamsters president Jimmy Hoffa, 1958; Baker, it went, "controlled Sonny's destiny."







of War Henry Stimson, he arranged the fighter's tour of army bases in Europe and North Africa.

After the war, Joe Louis—who had served in the armed forces for four of his years as champion and who had donated the purses of his 1942 title defenses to the Army and Navy Relief Funds—was called upon for back taxes. He turned to Truman Gibson, who set up Joe Louis Enterprises, Inc., to help the exploited champ.

In 1949, Gibson cut the deal which—through Louis's resignation as champion—created the I.B.C. The pact involved Norris and Wirtz's purchasing, from Louis Enterprises, the contracts of the four contenders for the title. This ultimately gave the I.B.C. exclusive promotional rights to the heavyweight championship.

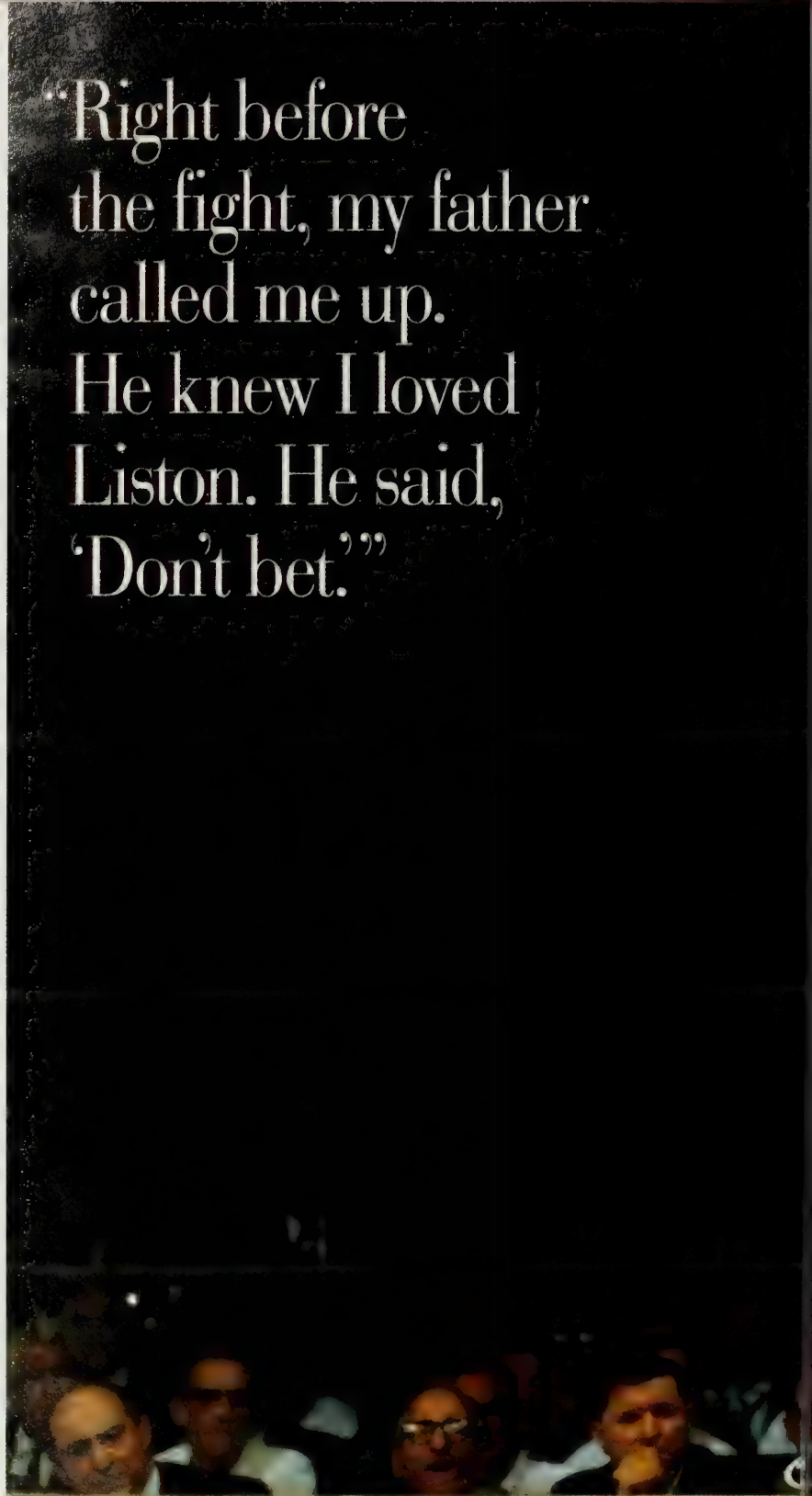
Once in control of the heavyweight title, the I.B.C. set out to place under contract the leading contenders in every principal division. The I.B.C. of Illinois grew into a network: the I.B.C. of New York, the I.B.C. of Missouri, etc. Norris and Wirtz gained control of the Madison Square Garden Corporation. Exclusive television contracts were negotiated with NBC and CBS. Gibson, Norris, and Wirtz—the I.B.C.'s board of directors—would later tell the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly, "During the period 1950 to 1959, practically all of the championships in the major weight categories were staged by one or the other of our organizations."

Yet there were problems, including the resistance of managers and boycotts by the Boxing Guild. Some believed that the I.B.C. would fade. Those doubts were silenced by a man whom old-timers recognized as the sovereign of the sport: Mr. Gray.

Or, more poetically, The Gray. He had more names than God: Frank Martin, Frank Tucker, The Man D[illegible] South, That Party, That Man, [illegible] Cousin, Our Friend, The Uncle, T[illegible] Ambassador, and back [illegible] era—Frankie the Wop and Dago F[illegible] Though his real name was often [illegible] to be Frank Carbo, he was a [illegible] Paul John Carbo, born on Man[illegible] Lower East Side in 1904.

Carbo was well mannered and well

"Right before the fight, my father called me up. He knew I loved Liston. He said, 'Don't bet.'"



AFTER THE FALL

[illegible]65: heavyweight [illegible] the world [illegible] stands over [illegible]iston. [illegible] to Ali [illegible]tion [illegible]ive on [illegible]ighting? [illegible]iston had



PHOTOGRAPH BY NEIL LEIFER

dressed. Most photographs show him smiling warmly, even when being taken into custody. He was, as they say, a gentleman among gentlemen, and—in a phrase less often turned—a killer among killers. His criminal record has been traced back to 1915, when he was 11. In 1928 he caught a murder rap and was sent to Sing Sing. Three years later, on parole, he was charged with the Atlantic City killing of millionaire bootlegger Mickey Duffy.

His next homicide arrest came in 1936 for the murders of two Mob bootleggers in New Jersey.

In 1940, Carbo and others, including Bugsy Siegel and Louis "Lepke" Buchalter, the head of Murder, Inc., were indicted for the 1939 Hollywood killing of Harry "Big Greenie" Greenberg, a Lepke defector. A turncoat ratted out Carbo, and a witness said she had seen him running down the street puffing a cigar after the shots. But all charges were dismissed.

By 1935, Carbo had become the licensed manager of middleweight champion Babe Risko and other boxers. By 1940, at the time of the Greenberg indictment, he was referred to as "a New York and Seattle fight promoter." By 1942, when the charges were dropped, he was "Frank Carbo, former fight promoter." After retiring from the daylight of the boxing world, Carbo became the leviathan of its night side. He had helped many men—and killed others. Most managers, promoters, and fighters were in his debt or feared him. There were few who did not court his favor.

James Norris knew Carbo casually. Both were gamblers who lived the lush life, and—as Truman Gibson told me—"Jim was enamored of all the Mob guys." Norris himself recalled how Carbo became the vital catalyst in the I.B.C.'s success. Encountering Norris one day, Carbo asked how his venture was going.

"Oh, no good," Norris said. "If it isn't the managers, it's a lack of talent or some other problems nobody could anticipate."

These words, Norris later said, were designed to elicit help. "As I recall, he grumbled and said he had problems of his own. I asked him if there was anyone that he knew we could use that might be helpful."

"No," Carbo told him.

Soon after, however, James Norris and the I.B.C. solidified their relationship with Carbo by placing Viola Masters, Carbo's future wife, on the payroll. She performed no known function but received $40,0[illegible] three years. Further con[illegible] a marriage of the interests [illegible] those of Frank Carbo [illegible] in [illegible] both [illegible] would [illegible]

"And was that policy that you finally decided on," the Senate investigating committee would later ask Gibson, "to cooperate with these underworld elements?"

"No, not to cooperate, but to live with them."

Carbo's lieutenant was Frank Palermo, a man everybody knew as Blinky.

"Do you know a Frank Palermo?" Sonny Liston would one day be asked by one of the investigating committees.

"No," he would say. "I never heard of Frank Palermo."

The inquisitor pressed him, again and again.

"You mean Blinky," Sonny said. "Yeah, I know Blinky. Everybody knows him."

Palermo, who lived in Philadelphia, was a licensed manager through whom Carbo shared in the direct control of many fighters, such as Billy Fox. Betting on Fox in his 1947 fight against the favorite, Jake LaMotta, Carbo made one of his greatest scores. No one but Carbo, Blinky, Jake, and the bagman knew that LaMotta had agreed to throw the fight to Fox in exchange for a shot at the middleweight title.

Fixed fights were actually rare. Truman Gibson says that of perhaps a thousand fights promoted by the I.B.C. he knew of only a few that were fixed.

In a world of guys who have been around, Truman Gibson has been around longer than any of them. Now in his 80s and still robust, sharp, and practicing law, Gibson hasn't lost the gleam in his eyes. Sitting in a Chinese restaurant in the On Leong section of Chicago, he told me about the fixes he knew about. The biggest was Archie Moore's dive in his 1955 New York title bout with Rocky Marciano. It was Marciano's last fight, and the fix ensured that he would retire undefeated. Afterward, Truman Gibson went with Moore's manager, Jack Kearns, to see his fighter in San Diego. "Archie was happy and took us to his offices, beautifully appointed. Then he said, 'I want you to meet my partners.' Brought two guys in, and Kearns looked over and said, 'You dirty son of a bitch.' The minute he saw those guys he knew what had happened."

The gleam brightened when Gibson told me of a second fix, involving a fighter named Red Top Davis. "The lamb was killing the butcher in this case," Gibson said. "Frank Carbo was the victim because the guy he was betting on took a dive. They wanted to throw Red Top in the Hudson River; they did everything to him."

Besides Palermo, there were others through whom Carbo controlled fighters such as Virgil Akins, 1958 welterweight champion, who came up in St. Louis with Sonny Liston.

Akins was managed jointly by Eddie Yawitz of St. Louis and Bernie Glickman of Chicago. Yawitz was a rich pharmacist; a bookmaker operated from his drugstore. Glickman, founder of the Kool Vent Awning Company, met Tony Accardo, Mob boss of the Windy City, when he installed awnings at Accardo's River Forest home. In 1951, Accardo gave him the opportunity to manage a few up-and-coming fighters.

In 1953, Glickman was introduced to Carbo and Palermo. Within a year he was handling fights and money for them. In time, the two Frankies gave him a piece of Virgil Akins, delivered to him by John Vitale, the St. Louis gentleman whom Frank Mitchell fronted for during his years as Sonny Liston's manager of record.

When Mitchell died in 1970, obituaries spoke of a publisher whose paper, the *Argus,* had "won recognition for its reporting and interpretation of racial problems." They spoke of a man "active in police-community relations work." They did not speak of his hidden criminal record, which included 18 arrests for gambling, seducing others into wrongdoing, and counterfeiting.

From the government transcript of Mitchell's 1960 testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly:

"Did you at one time manage a heavyweight contender named Charles 'Sonny' Liston?"

"I take the Fifth Amendment."

"Were you the on-the-record manager of Liston from 1952 until 1958?"

"I decline to answer."

"During the period ... is it a fact that John Vitale was the undercover manager of boxer Sonny Liston?"

"I decline to answer."

"You are directed to answer."

"I take the Fifth Amendment."

"During the period from 1952 until 1958, did you give this man, John Vitale, the proceeds from Liston's purses?"

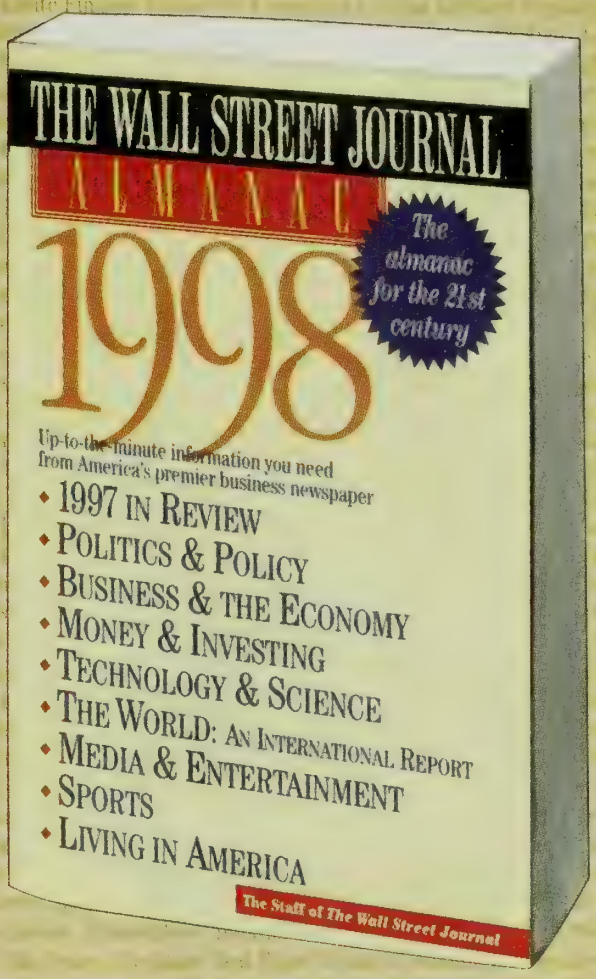
"I decline to answer that question."

"In March of 1958, did you go to Chicago with John Vitale and meet with a man known as Frank 'Blinky' Palermo?"

"I take the Fifth Amendment."

John Joseph Vitale headed what there was of the St. Louis Mob. Born in 1909 in the city's Sicilian section, Vitale headed Anthony Novelty, a jukebox, pinball, and vending-machine business operated by his lieutenants. His record of

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more than 20 arrests stretched back to 1927, including two busts for murder.

St. Louis was never a Mob stronghold, more an outpost of Chicago, and in the old Missouri city Vitale's power was equaled—if not surpassed—by that of the so-called Syrian Mob, the criminal segment of the city's large Middle Eastern population.

"Is it a fact, Mr. Vitale, that from 1952 until 1958, Frank Mitchell acted as a front man for you in the management of Sonny Liston?"

"I stand on the fifth amendment."

"Do you know the present No. 1 heavyweight contender, Charles 'Sonny' Liston?"

"I decline to answer on the grounds that I may tend to incriminate myself."

"You are directed to answer the question."

"Fifth amendment."

"Is it a fact that in 1958 you divided up Sonny Liston with Frank Palermo and Frank Carbo and he is presently managed undercover by you, Frank Palermo, and Frankie Carbo?"

"I decline to answer on the grounds I may tend to incriminate myself."

"Would you care, on the basis of your general knowledge of boxing, to give the subcommittee some of your own thoughts as to how to eliminate underworld racketeering and monopoly in the field of boxing?"

"I take the fifth amendment." Pause. "What a question."

Vitale shared control of St. Louis's organized labor with the Syrians. In 1952, not long before Liston was released from the Missouri State Penitentiary in Jefferson City, Vitale began feuding with Joe Gribler, the head of Local 110, the most important of the city's labor unions, and with Gribler's aide, George Meyers.

Meyers was shot in the head that spring, Gribler that summer. A Vitale ally—a South Side Syrian gambler named Raymond Sarkis—was appointed to head the union. On the night of the slaying, Gribler was seen getting into Vitale's car. Vitale was arrested on suspicion of murder, but never tried.

When Sonny Liston was paroled in the fall of 1952, his jobs were all Local 110 jobs. Larry Gazall and Terry Lynch were kids working at the Union Electric plant in South County. The boys had gotten their jobs through Ray Massu[illegible] union boss who was related to S[illegible] Liston, they were hod carriers who [illegible] loaded firebricks. With them was Ray Massud's son, John. "He probably weighed about 300 pounds," Lynch recalled. "Him and Sonny used to have a contest of hitting each other. John would get him at the end of the boxcar and run at Sonny and hit him as hard as he could and wouldn't even budge him. Sonny would have John about a foot away from his shoulder, hit him, and just knock him on his ass."

Lynch and Gazall remember Sonny fondly. "He was a real nice guy," Gazall said, and his pal agreed: "He was quiet . . . like he was embarrassed about his being uneducated and things like that."

Claude E. Lyles Jr. also worked with Sonny, and his memories are similar. "He didn't want to talk to anybody," Lyles said. "Whenever he went over to eat, he would sit by himself. He didn't want anybody to sit with him."

Recalling his time with Sonny Liston at Union Electric, Terry Lynch brought up something rather specific and perhaps important. "Some days, he wouldn't be there." The belief was that Liston had a side job, that he moonlighted as "a kind of chauffeur, quasi-bodyguard." For Ray Sarkis.

Sam Eveland, the inmate who had been Sonny's trainer in prison in Jefferson City, recalled walking toward a joint called Preacher's within six or seven months after Sonny got out of prison. "I seen him driving a Cadillac," Eveland told me. "He had a big black Cadillac and he was eating a hot dog. I brought him in—it's an all-white tavern—and I said, 'This is gonna be your next heavyweight champ of the world.'" The rumor, said Eveland, was that "Vitale had got ahold of him" and "gave him a job being a strongman."

Liston would say that it was Vitale who introduced him to Sarkis.

William Anderson, a retired police officer, remembered the old days well, days when he trained and fought on the St. Louis Golden Gloves team with Sonny. "Well, Sonny to me, I mean, I see him different than most people. People saw him as a thug, a hooligan . . . always beating people up. But I saw him a little different. He was a tough, no-nonsense guy, but we had a lot of fun together."

Anderson also knew Vitale. "J.V.," he called him. He said that "J.V. was really involved deeply with boxing. He had his hand in just about everything."

It has been said that Sonny worked as a leg-breaker for the union, and Anderson believes this to be true. "He was kind of a [illegible]eavy man for the union," he said, "him [illegible]man named Big Barney Baker."

I remembered Truman Gibson, tha[illegible] gleam in his eye, saying of Sonny "Barney Baker was his guy."

Robert Bernard Baker. He liked to tel[illegible] a story about how he had fought on the U.S. boxing team at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, how he had stood in the ring before Hitler with a Star of Davic emblazoned on his trunks.

Big Barney Baker. Born in New York in 1911, he had spent the 30s on the West Side waterfront of Manhattan. The 40s found him in Florida, working for Jake and Meyer Lansky at their newly opened Colonial Inn, and then in Washington, D.C. There, in 1950, he was elected president of Local 730.

Barney Baker had gone to the Lanskys as a wanted man, sought in a New York murder case. And when the heat followed him to Florida, he headed west to Las Vegas, where he took a room at the Flamingo, which was not yet officially opened, as Bugsy Siegel, whom he had met in Florida, had not quite finished building it.

He was big, well over 300 pounds, at least thrice wed, and, according to one union official, "very gregarious." Though Baker was known as a labor organizer and as "a feared enforcer" and "special-assignment expert," Truman Gibson sees him as one of the great mystery figures of our time. "He was ubiquitous," Truman said. "Always appearing on the scene. In Detroit, in Washington, in Las Vegas." The files of the Warren Commission show that Jack Ruby called him during the weeks preceding the assassination of John Kennedy.

Said Gibson, "Baker was—all of this was—*is* related to Sonny because he is the guy that controlled Sonny's destiny. Never in front."

From his position at Local 730 in Washington, Baker rose in the Teamsters to serve both Harold Gibbons and Jimmy Hoffa, and he was—according to Gibson—very close to Paul Dorfman, the power behind the Teamsters. It was Gibbons who sent Baker to St. Louis in 1952 to straighten out some trouble at a taxicab company owned by Vitale's associate Joe Costello.

William Anderson recalled that Liston did some work for Costello. Sonny and Barney, Anderson said, "were musclemen for the union. And Barney was a great fight fan."

Liston, interrogated by Senator Estes Kefauver, in 1960:

"Do you know John Vitale?"

"Yes, I know him."

"Do you know a person named Barney Baker?"

Liston

"Yes, I met him."

"By the way, what does Mr. Baker do for a living?"

"I couldn't say. I'm not—I don't know."

"What does Mr. Vitale do for a living?"

"I wouldn't know either."

"How did you come to meet this fellow Barney Baker?"

"I have a very short memory."

"Do you believe that people like this ought to remain in the sport of boxing, Mr. Liston?"

"Well, I couldn't pass judgment on no one. I haven't been perfect myself."

"Since you left St. Louis in 1958, have you met Mr. Baker?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where did you meet him?"

"Chicago."

Chicago. Sonny couldn't get there fast enough. By 1956, St. Louis had become his hell. He was the only real contender who ever came out of that town. But, instead of being treated like a hero, he was despised.

Liston's rap sheet from 1953, when he got out of prison, to 1958, when he got out of St. Louis, shows 14 arrests.

In my journey through the chthonic regions of Sonny Liston's St. Louis, Lieutenant Colonel James J. Hackett, who recently retired after 42 years on the force, was my Virgil. He spoke straight and gave me history that can be found in no book, led me to people and places that only few knew about. When we met, he was counting down time to his retirement. I began to feel that the mystery of Liston had rekindled his street detective's sense of excitement, and I am thankful.

I asked Hackett to study Liston's rap sheet and, if he could, analyze it as if its subject were without name or identity. He scrutinized it carefully for a few minutes.

"Most of these are just sausage pinches," he said matter-of-factly.

I hesitated a moment, then asked what a sausage pinch was.

"A sausage pinch. You pick the guy up, put him on the steel for 20 hours, feed him a bologna sandwich, send him home."

Twenty hours on the steel: no way out without a lawyer bringing habeas corpus. Liston would remember those nights on the steel.

Under questioning by the Senate subcommittee, he was asked if he recalled a certain arrest during which he stated that he had been introduced to Ray Sarkis by John Vitale.

"No; I don't. The way it is there—I mean I may have said anything because they just kept grabbing me, picking me up, holding me overnight. If nobody come down to make a squawk to get me out, they keep me; then they finally let me go. Next day, back in. So what am I supposed to do? I said what they wanted me to say, because who wanted to sleep on that cold steel all that night?"

Sausage pinches. Nights on the steel. I asked Truman Gibson if he thought Sonny was a victim of police harassment.

Truman thought a moment. "Well," he said, "some people invite harassment."

The more Liston drank, the more he got in trouble. And Sonny drank a lot. "Canadian Club," Sam Eveland said. Truman Gibson named the same brand. "By the bottle," he added. "He loved the 1843 bourbon," William Anderson said. Lowell Powell, a black cop who befriended Sonny, said, "He'd drink anything. He would drink white lightning."

This went against natural law. Boozers made bad boxers. "The fighters in those days, they didn't drink," Gibson said, but Sonny "was a heavy drinker. He might have been an alcoholic." He seems to have had a sense of shame about his drinking, a shame that compelled him to hide it from priests and certain others. Booze was his mistress, his one true lover. And, in time, his devourer.

On Sonny's rap sheet, Hackett saw one entry which he designated as more than a sausage pinch. It occurred on May 5, 1956. There are a lot of tales about that night. According to the story accepted by police and the press, Patrolman Thomas Mellow, aged 41, was making his rounds when he saw a taxi parked in the alley beside Liston's home, at 4454 St. Louis Avenue. The car's parking lights were on, and Mellow asked aloud whose cab it was. A man on the porch, Willie Patterson, said it was his.

Mellow told him he could get a ticket and suggested that he move the cab. "Then," as Mellow told it, "Liston came down. 'You can't give him no ticket,' he said, real tough-like. 'The hell I can't,' I said. I took out my ticket book, flashlight, to get the city sticker number off the cab. Liston came over and gave me a bear hug from the front, lifted me clear off the ground."

In the alley, the three men struggled, and Liston took Mellow's service revolver. Patterson said, "Shoot the white son of a bitch." Liston put the gun to Mellow's head. Mellow hollered, "Don't shoot me." Liston then struck the cop over the left eye "with either the gun or his fist. It took seven stitches. My left leg was broken in the knee from the fall or somebody stomping me."

Liston "appeared to be drinking; the fellows that arrested him had a little trouble."

According to Liston: "I called a cab to come pick me up. I saw the cab pull up into the alleyway, and I hurried out of the house. Meanwhile, a cop came up and told the cabbie he was going to give him a ticket. I said, 'How come you going to give this cab a ticket? He's just doing his business.' Then the cop turns to me and says, 'You're a smart nigger,' and when I say 'I'm not smart,' he reaches for his gun and tries to take it out of his holster, but I take it away from him. Later the cop said I was drunk. Now how could a drunk handle a sober cop trained to make arrests and to pull his gun? I never drink any hard liquor anyway."

It was likely that neither man told the truth. But as one veteran of the force summed it up for me, "This Mellow was no prize."

In the end, Liston pleaded guilty and was sentenced, in January 1957, to nine months in the city workhouse.

According to the papers, a woman on the porch of the Liston home was said to have heard Mellow cry out, "Don't hurt me." She was identified as Geraldine Chambers, who was in fact Sonny's girlfriend. On August 28, four days after Sonny was paroled from the workhouse following a seven-month incarceration, he and Geraldine applied for a license, and on September 3, 1957, they were married by the Reverend G. L. Hayden.

Cops such as William Anderson and Lowell Powell had been Sonny's friends. "I was a policeman and he was something of a thug," Powell recalled, but nonetheless their dealings were amicable. In the big picture, however, there was no love lost between Sonny and the cops. The assault on Mellow exacerbated the situation. "At that time," Powell said, "the policemen were the real bosses around St. Louis, and fighting a policeman was unheard of, really. We'd call them 'nixie fighters.'"

Captain John Dougherty was a man with a penchant for running people out of town. He had got rid of Barney Baker. As Dean Shendal—a former owner of Caesars Palace, who specialized in sticking up bookmakers as a kid in St. Louis—

Liston

remembers it, there was nothing like the ire that Liston brought out in Dougherty. "Five coppers tried to lock Sonny. This ain't no bullshit story. They broke hickory nightsticks over his head. They couldn't get his hands cuffed. He was a monster."

The tale has been told that Dougherty literally took Liston to the tracks at the outskirts of town, stuck a gun to his head, and told him to leave. Sonny's story, though less melodramatic, amounts to pretty much the same thing: "Well, the captain, Captain Dougherty, told me to my face, if I wanted to stay alive, to leave St. Louis." Dougherty's words were: "If you don't, they'll find you in an alley."

Sonny Liston fought only one fight in 1956, none in 1957. In January 1958 he left St. Louis for his first professional match in Chicago: a second-round knockout of Bill Hunter. John Vitale delivered Sonny, as he had delivered other St. Louis fighters, to the fold of the Chicago Mob through Bernie Glickman, who was to be Frank Mitchell's new partner in the management of Liston. Glickman, whose welterweight Virgil Akins was on the verge of becoming champion, saw in Liston the greatest possibility he had ever known.

But Carbo and Blinky soon came to feel that Sonny was too big for Chicago. Sam Giancana, who had taken over from Accardo the previous year, returned from a meeting in Philadelphia and called Glickman.

"He meets my father at the Armory Lounge," Bernie's son, Joel, told me. "They're having dinner, just the two of them, and he tells my father that he had to give up Liston." Glickman was to receive a buyout price of 50 grand.

Liston's next fight took him to Chicago as well.

"Well," as he would tell it, "I went up to fight this fight and Frank Mitchell told me when I left St. Louis that it would be a man by the name of 'Pep' Barone to come up with the contract and for you to sign it and he will get you East, where you can get sparring partners and more fights, a better trainer."

The five-year contract with Joseph "Pep" Barone entitled Barone to 50 percent of Liston's income. An unwritten clause, the only clause that mattered, would deliver most of that percentage to Carbo and Blinky; a piece would go to Barone himself, and lesser pieces to Giancana in Chicago, as well as Vitale and Mitchell in St. Louis.

The contract was signed on March 11, the night of the fight: a fourth-round knockout of Ben Wise at the Midwest Athletic Club. Sonny returned to St. Louis to fight Bert Whitehurst on April 3. It was another win for Liston.

After that, Sonny left St. Louis for good and moved to Philadelphia, where Blinky awaited him. His next Chicago fight, a third-round knockout of Julio Mederos, was his first nationally televised match, part of the I.B.C.'s Wednesday-night program on CBS. On August 6, in another televised I.B.C. fight in Chicago, he knocked out Wayne Bethea in the first.

There was no stopping Liston. By the end of 1961, his professional record, marred only by his sole, narrow-decision loss to Marshall, consisted of 33 wins, 23 of which were knockouts. Only one man stood between him and the heavyweight championship of the world. Still, Liston was in a bad place.

Ben Bentley, the I.B.C. matchmaker, publicist, and ringside announcer, was Liston's first promoter in Chicago. Blinky was a man whom Bentley considered to be "a good friend," and Blinky was one of the few men who seemed truly to care for Liston. During the period when Bentley was close to Liston and traveled with him constantly, Blinky would call frequently, instructing Bentley always to call him back collect from a pay phone at such and such a number.

Recalled Bentley, "He'd wanna know how did he do in training, how is he doing in training, does he see this guy, does he see that guy, who's his sparring partners, is he behaving himself, is he runnin' around?" When they were together, Blinky would put his arm around Bentley and say, "Tell me, has he been drinking?"

Blinky seemed to be one of the few men whom Liston trusted. He was the sort of tough guy that Sonny had always wanted to be.

But then Blinky and Carbo disappeared. A 1959 federal racketeering trial in Los Angeles, involving the extortion of welterweight champion Don Jordan, ended in the conviction of both men. In 1961, Carbo was sentenced to 25 years, Blinky to 15. For Sonny, there was no one left to turn to.

Floyd Patterson was the heavyweight champion, and he did not want to fight Sonny. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was against the idea of a Patterson-Liston fight; its president, Percy Sutton, came right out and said it: Patterson "represents us better than Liston ever could or would." Liston was seen, by black as well as white, as the Bad Nigger.

"That bum Patterson don't want to fight me," Liston complained on April 10, 1961, in one of the letters he "wrote" through the hand of another.

On April 19, Liston announced that he was buying back his contract from Pep Barone, whose role as a front man for Blinky and Carbo had been widely publicized by the Kefauver hearings. On April 25, Liston signed a new contract, with George Katz, a Philadelphia manager who was as white, straight, and worthless as they came.

His former manager, Barone, had not been licensed to manage in the state where he operated. Now, soon after his cleansing, Sonny lost his license to box in the state where he lived. On May 17, he was arrested for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest, charges later changed to loitering. A sausage pinch, as the guys in St. Louis said.

On June 14, in the dark before dawn, 29-year-old Dolores Ellis was driving through Fairmount Park in the Philadelphia suburb of Lansdowne. Two men in another vehicle came abreast of her car, directed a spotlight toward her, announced that they were police, and motioned her to stop. One of the men ordered her out of her car, and she complied. A park guard happened by, and the two men sped away. The guard, in pursuit, fired a warning shot and caught them after a half-mile chase.

There, sitting calmly behind the wheel, was Sonny Liston.

His new manager came to his defense. "Sonny is a fun-loving person who likes to play pranks."

On July 14, Liston was suspended indefinitely by the Pennsylvania Athletic Commission. He spent the next months in Denver with Father Edward Murphy, a Jesuit priest he had met in 1960. The press made much of Sonny's "rehabilitation."

Finally, after many hours of complicated negotiations and much bargaining, Liston's shot at the title was scheduled. He trained for his bout with Patterson with a new version of "Night Train," by James Brown's Famous Flames: same night, same train, but with a rhythm like a nasty automatic's instead of Jimmy Forrest's big bad long revolver.

"Never before have I had such a feeling against any fighter," Sonny announced three weeks before the fight, which came on the night of September 25, 1962, at Comiskey Park in Chicago, where Joe Louis had won the title back in '37.

In boxing, nothing is better for bus



Sonny Liston—seen at Caesars Palace in June 1967—moved to Las Vegas in 1966. His house in Paradise Township was purchased from financier Kirk Kerkorian and was less than a mile from where his pal ex-champ Joe Louis lived. The fighters loved to shoot craps on Louis's bedroom floor.

ness than a fight between a black man and a white: such is humanity shorn of hypocrisy. Short of that, nothing is better than a fight between good and evil. "If Liston should be lucky enough to win," said Patterson, "I hope you'll accept him the way you accepted me. You know, there's a little bit of good in everybody." And Liston, beholding Patterson, had said simply: "I'll kill him." There in Comiskey Park, on that chill, gray night, there was such a fight, perhaps the most dramatic of them all, and barely had breath been drawn by the more than 18,000 gathered there, and by the half a million gathered before the closed-circuit screens of America, when an astounded silence overtook them, and then a loud and roaring anger. The match lasted 126 seconds, and ended with Patterson on his back, looking up, stunned, at the new heavyweight champion of the world.

James Baldwin wrote of leaving the fight in a state of sadness, of going "off to a bar, to mourn the death of boxing; and to have a drink, with love, for Floyd."

Two weeks later, back in Philly, Liston was busted again in Fairmount Park. According to the officer who pulled him over for driving suspiciously, "He became very nasty, and he said that I was prejudiced because he was colored." When Liston stepped from his Cadillac, "he staggered and swayed."

On November 30, Sonny and Geraldine left Philadelphia and moved to Chicago.

Ben Bentley served briefly as Liston's publicity director. He recalled the spring of 1963, when columnist Drew Pearson invited him to bring Sonny as a guest of honor to a Washington banquet for the Big Brothers of America. An audience with President Kennedy could not be arranged; Attorney General Robert Kennedy was, at the time, engaged in a crusade against the element which had produced not only the new heavyweight champion of the world but his own family's fortune. Liston was invited, however, to meet with the vice president. In Lyndon Johnson's office, amid various decorative objects and mementos, there was "an alligator or something," Bentley recalled, "made out of leather or something."

"I know where that comes from," Sonny said. "That's what we made in prison."

After a few minutes with Johnson, Sonny grew restless, leaned toward Bentley, and whispered, "Let's blow this bum off."

Sonny was in a foul mood that day, and he started drinking. When they arrived back in Chicago that night, Sonny went off. About two or three in the morning, Ben got a call. The caller was a black ex-cop who sometimes served as Sonny's driver and bodyguard.

Sonny had just raped the bodyguard's wife.

The crime—Liston's first known rape—never made the papers. Matt Rodriguez, the superintendent of police in Chicago, is one of the few who ever knew of it. Some years later, the bodyguard told Rodriguez that there had been a "settlement."

That spring of 1963, Sonny and Geraldine left Chicago and moved to Denver.

On July 22, at the Las Vegas Convention Center, Sonny fought Patterson one more time. Again, the fight lasted less than a round. Now there was nobody left to fight except a 22-year-old kid from Louisville named Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr.—a child of the light who seemed all that Liston was not: a good, clean, middle-class boy who, instead of bringing shame to America, had brought her a gold medal from the 1960 Rome Olympics.

During my time in St. Louis, Jim Hackett had been studying the film of the Liston-Clay fight. He was transfixed by the fleeting glimpse of a figure in Liston's corner, a man who seemed strangely familiar to him. "This guy had a straw hat on," he said. Then it hit him. The fellow had been a cop years ago in St. Louis, and Hackett was certain that if he could be found he could unlock a door that no one had ever succeeded in opening.

Hackett put the word out. With the help of his friend William Anderson, the man in the straw hat was found. Hackett called him; Anderson phoned, too, and also paid a visit to his home. The mysterious ex-cop was, however, not forthcoming, despite our many attempts. Then one morning I dialed and he picked up.

"Wasn't no straw hat," he said. "Was a little old stingy-brim, porkpie."

He decided to talk, but didn't want "all that quotation-mark shit." He told me that he had known Sonny in the old days and that, in 1963, when he retired from the force, Liston had hired him as a bodyguard and right-hand man.

Though Sonny and Geraldine were childless, Geraldine had a daughter, Bernice, from a previous union. Sonny, though no one knew it, had fathered a daughter of his own not long after leaving prison. Following their move to Denver, he asked his new right-hand man to take him to her.

"He hadn't seen her in life," the ex-cop said, "but he knew who the mother was." My new acquaintance found Sonny's daughter and accompanied the boxer and Geraldine when they went to meet her. "Boy, you could tell she was Sonny's daughter. She looked like he spit her out.

"So, we were sitting at the dinner table, and she had done some things that he didn't like. She had taken some money off him or something, and he said, 'Here's this police detective, and he's gonna get you.' I said, 'No, baby, I'm not gonna bother you.' So he didn't know how to admonish me. He said, 'You know, you're not nothing, you just nothing,' and blah-blah-blah.

"The J&B was talking. I introduced him to J&B, and he drank it all the time he was champion. So I said, 'Well, I'm sorry you feel that way.' He said, 'You know, I'm tired of you,' and this, that. . . . I thought about all the guys that he had hit, you know . . . and I said, 'Well, Geraldine, I'm talking with Sonny, and we're doing some arguing, and I'm no match for Sonny in a fight. I know that he's the

heavyweight champion of the world. . . . I could see Sonny had balled his fists up. 'All I want you to do is stand out of my way and let me out of here.'

"The next day, he was crying, telling me he was sorry and all that. I said, 'What you wanted was to pop me. . . . But if you hit me in the jaw, it's not gonna be like that. There won't be no apologizing . . . because if you miss and you don't knock me out, I'm gonna have to kill you.' So we made up and we got even closer."

"When the J&B started working," said my friend with the hat, "that's when his personality changed. When that whiskey took over, he was Mr. Hyde."

As far as is known, Sonny's sexual assaults were confined to the period of his championship reign. One incident involved a motel chambermaid, remembered the man in the porkpie hat. "The girl's crying and everything and getting ready to call the police. She said, 'I'm gonna call my husband.' I said, 'You tell your husband, but don't get the police right now.' I talked with the husband, and I got about two or three thousand dollars in 10s and 20s and 50s and laid 'em on the table. I said, 'She said he did, and he said he didn't. I'm not trying to buy him out of it, but money beats nothing.' That guy picked up that money and didn't look back."

I asked my informative acquaintance about the most famous fight, that stingy-brim night in Miami Beach, February 25, 1964, that momentous occasion when Liston was vanquished by Cassius Clay.

It was barely three months after the Kennedy assassination and the Liston-Clay title fight was the first blood revelry that a post-hysteric America allowed herself. The crowd that gathered at Miami's Convention Hall and all the other crowds—the bread-and-circuses populace—that gathered in the closed-circuit showrooms and theaters throughout America were there not so much to see a contest, for no contest was foreseen. An Associated Press poll of 32 boxing experts revealed that all but 2 predicted that Liston would win by a knockout. This sense of the inevitable evinced itself in the lackluster gate at Convention Hall, where only about half of the 16,000 tickets, priced from $20 to $250, were sold. What crowd there was seemed part of a masque in a season of psychic [illegible].

The air of festive anticipation [illegible] unsettling one. The scent of de[illegible] and fancy cologne mixed w[illegible] cheap aftershave, smoke, and s[illegible] oversize head of tough-guy manqué Norman Mailer was no longer alone in blocking the view at ringside. Beside him sat fellow tough guy Truman Capote and Gloria Guinness of *Harper's Bazaar.*

Clay's pulse had raced to 120 during the weigh-in, and the adrenaline of fear seemed still within him as he entered the ring. That fight-or-flee rush drove him forward and into Liston with a frenzy, and he took the first round. Sonny began to grind him down in the second, but his blows were delivered with none of the awesome power that in the past had felled man after man. In the third, Clay opened a cut under Sonny's eye, drawing forth what Sonny had given no other man since the days of those whippings. In the fourth, Sonny connected repeatedly, but again, his blows seemed oddly restrained, and Clay came in again to bruise Sonny's fearsome face.

At the end of round four, Clay came to his corner screaming surrender. "I can't see," he wailed to his trainer, Angelo Dundee. "Cut off my gloves. Call off the fight." At the sound of the bell, Dundee pushed Clay to his feet.

In the fifth, Clay, who claimed difficulty seeing, had no difficulty in dodging Sonny's punches, which seemed at times designed not so much to hit Clay as to punctuate the air of his blind bob-and-weave. Clay reached out his left arm and rested his gloved fist against Sonny's nose, as if to keep the beast at bay. Though Sonny's reach was greater, he never struck or swatted that arm away.

At the end of the round, Clay's vision returned, and Barney Felix, the referee, who was about to stop the fight and award a technical-knockout victory to Liston, allowed the match to continue. After six rounds, the fight was even on points. The bell sounded to signal the start of the seventh round, and Liston just sat there, refusing to come forth and talking of a numbness that ran from his left shoulder down to his forearm.

When Liston failed to come out of his corner in the seventh round, the man in the porkpie hat knew what others did not know.

"I had bet what we called a lot of money on Sonny," the man began. "Three or four thousand. Then I said, 'Sonny, I'm gonna put more money on you.'

"He said, 'Don't put any more on me, man. Two heavyweights out there, you can't ever tell. . . . You've got enough bet.' That's as far as he would go with me.

"So, later on, after he lost the fight, I said, 'Sonny, why would you let me lose my last penny on a fight? . . . You could've at least pulled my coat.'

"He said, 'With your big mouth, we'd both be wearing concrete suits.'"

Bernie Glickman from Chicago was around that night. His son, Joel, said, "Right before the fight, my father called me up. He knew I liked to gamble and he knew I loved Liston. He said, 'Don't bet. There's something wrong. I don't know what it is.' I'll never forget that. I didn't listen."

A Chicago bookmaker remembered it all. "The biggest key to it was the odds. The fight was five-and-a-half-to-one, and by fight time it was down to about two-to-one. One guy, he called me from Vegas, he wanted to bet five grand on Clay. He was looking for four- or five-to-one, but I'd already heard they were down to three-to-one. So I said I'd give him three-to-one. But for a fight to have dropped down like that. And if you knew anything, there was no way Clay could hurt Liston."

I always thought it was a dive, had never believed the story about Liston's quitting because of a bad left shoulder. This was a man who had gone four rounds with a broken jaw and with no title at stake.

But no one I knew could figure the payoff angle. Then, one night in Chicago, a wise adviser told me to look to the East. To Mecca.

Liston had his crew in Miami: Pep Barone; his new managers, the Nilon brothers; Sam Margolis, an old partner of Blinky's; Joe Louis; Irving "Ash" Resnick, a Vegas hustler he had met while training for the second Patterson fight.

Among Clay's crew was Malcolm X. The two had met in 1962, and though Clay's interest in Islam had already blossomed by then, it was Malcolm who cultivated and, in Miami, completed Clay's conversion. Malcolm had fallen from grace with the leaders of the Nation of Islam in Chicago. He was afraid of violence. He saw Clay as a way to reinstate himself, and offered to deliver the fighter to the faith. He would bring him to the Savior's Day convention on the day after the big fight. The Chicago leaders believed Liston would win. But the idea of a Black Muslim champion held great power for them.

"They were rough people," Truman Gibson mused when I broached the subject.

Clay was the first great fighter in boxing's post-Carbo age. He had, so to speak, been born to freedom and was virgin meat as far as the Mob was concerned. Soon, when his contract with the Louisville Group expired, he signed with a Muslim manager.

A tithe for Islam surely would not be too much to ask of a man as blessed as Clay. And from that tithe Sonny might draw a portion. Clay had a big future. To Sonny, a man who felt rather than knew his age, a cut of that future might not have seemed a bad deal.

Soon after the fight, the victor proclaimed his conversion and announced his new name: Muhammad Ali. His jubilation was real. Knowing nothing of what Sonny knew, he had no reason to disbelieve that he was the greatest.

"White people wanted Liston to . . . kill poor little Clay," said the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, ruler of the Nation of Islam, on Savior's Day. "But Allah and myself said no. This assured his victory."

There are many stories of the immense losses Ash Resnick incurred in Miami by betting on his friend. There are whispers of suitcases of cash sent by Ash to New York, where other, less ostentatious bets were made.

The suspicions and trouble stirred by the Miami fight were such that no state with a reputation for boxing would sanction the rematch, and it was held before a sparse crowd at a schoolboy hockey arena in Lewiston, Maine. One thing is certain: in that May 1965 rematch—it was Liston-Ali then—Liston lay down in the first, revealing less acting ability than in the *Love American Style* episode in which he later appeared. "I had overtrained," Liston would say. But that fight was not merely a fix; it was a flaunted fix, foolishly attributed by interested observers to physical intimidation by Muslims reportedly gathered to seek revenge for the recent assassination of Malcolm X (who, as history would reveal, had in fact been murdered by members of his own faith).

In Denver, a month after losing the title, Sonny started getting into police trouble again. In March 1966, he moved to a home in Las Vegas purchased from financier Kirk Kerkorian. The house, at 2058 Ottawa Drive, in the exclusive area of Paradise Township, was less than a mile from where his buddy Joe Louis lived, at 3333 Seminole Circle, in a house bought from Johnny Carson.

During 1966–67, Liston fought abroad exclusively. "This fighting is for the bird," reads a letter of January 1967. In May of 1967, the Listons returned from Sweden with a three-year-old boy, Danielle, whom they said they had adopted.

"I'm my own manager now," Liston declared in the summer of 1967, a few breaths before musing, "All I need is a manager. Somebody with a nice, clean record." That fall it was rumored that Sammy Davis Jr. would take the job.

Interrupted by an arrest—for drunken driving, in February 1969—Sonny fought 10 fights between March 1968 and September 1969. He won them all, nine by knockouts. In December 1969, at Kirk Kerkorian's new International Hotel in Vegas, three-to-one underdog Leotis Martin knocked him out in the ninth.

There would be one more fight, with Chuck Wepner, on June 29, 1970. At the weigh-in and press conference a few days before that Jersey City fight, a reporter asked Liston if he would request a license to fight in New York, which had always been denied him.

"I'm on my way down," he snarled. "The hell with New York."

Wepner recalled that it was a surly motherfucker who looked down impassively at Wepner's hand when he extended it for a pre-fight shake before the press.

The fight ended in a win for Liston only when Wepner, one of the great warhorses of boxing, could no longer see.

Three men had flown from Las Vegas with Sonny to the Wepner fight: Johnny Tocco, Davey Pearl, and Lem Banker. Tocco—who died in 1997—had been Sonny's trainer in St. Louis and, at the time of the Wepner fight, was back with Liston again. Pearl, a legendary referee, performed duties usually taken care of by a manager. Banker was a Liston buddy, recently described by *The New York Times* as "perhaps one of the most successful gamblers in Las Vegas."

Pearl, who is now 80, took early-morning runs with Sonny. Some days, Liston wasn't home when Davey arrived. According to another friend, Gene Kilroy, Liston was, as often as not, shooting craps at Joe Louis's, where the fighters gambled on the bedroom floor. Joe, according to another close source, was a craps degenerate. Truman Gibson, Joe's old friend, claimed that America's most beloved boxer had also become a junkie. Gibson remembered Louis as so strung out that he was hearing voices from an air conditioner. Louis was hospitalized for a breakdown in 1970.

Banker—now 70—said that, sometime after the Wepner fight, a Las Vegas sheriff told him, "I know you're friendly with Sonny. Tell him he's hanging around the wrong people on the West Side. We're gonna bust these guys."

Charles Broadus, known as Doc, recalled running around with Sonny. "We drank together," and chased women. "We had fun. We'd run together day and night. We enjoyed what we was doing, and that was that." As far as Broadus knew, Sonny never messed with dope.

He did mess with girls. "Hey," Dean Shendal said. "Ever see him in the dressing room? Holy Christ, he could scare a horse." But no one who knew Liston believed that he was on dope. However, according to the man in the porkpie hat, he was selling it.

He had received a long letter from Sonny. "I guess everyone was upset over the fight," it said, in reference to the Miami mess, but it was good "to know I still have Friend. I know Friend ar much better then money." The letter ended, "I hope to see you when I get some money. I had not for got you."

On his way to visit his brother in Los Angeles, the man in the porkpie hat stopped in Vegas. It was maybe two weeks before Christmas 1970. "I came looking for Sonny and he wasn't at home, so I talked with Geraldine for a while. She said, 'Sonny has gotten unruly.' I said, 'Isn't he coming home for dinner?' She said, 'No, he doesn't trust me on food and things; he gets his little Kentucky Frieds and things, and you can catch him over there at the Hilton Hotel. You go to the casino, and if he's not there, you just stand there five minutes and he'll come through.'"

The Hilton—it was actually still the International—was only minutes from the Listons'. "I was there, I'd say, five minutes before he touched me on the shoulder. So we spent the evening together. We had both just ordered new Cadillacs. I had got mine, he was waiting for his. He wanted me to stay, but I had to go. He drove me to the airport." He did not seem unruly. "He was in a very friendly mood."

Another person who saw a lot of Sonny in those days was Ash Resnick, one of the owners of Caesars Palace. In 1974 he would be convicted of tax evasion for failing to report more than $300,000 skimmed from Caesars. (The decision was later overturned.) The same year, eight sticks of dynamite were found under Resnick's car. According to Dean Shendal, who had been his partner in Caesars, Ash put them there himself; they were "nothing but Texas sawdust." Two years later, he was shot at, or so it seemed. Ash was, as comedian Shecky Greene put it, "a Damon Runyon character" who "could be very loyal and very good and then turn around and do something that you couldn't believe." Everybody loved Ash. But, as Lem Banker said, "nobody trusted him."

Though Resnick was often considered to have been Mobbed-down, those who

Liston

knew him saw this as a self-perpetuated myth. His real connection, according to Shecky Greene, was "a New York man called Abe Margolis in the jewelry business. Every time he needed money or something, he'd get it from Abe. I think Abe is even the one who gave him money to go into Caesars."

Ash and Sonny were very, very tight, but no one could figure why. "Ash had him hypnotized," Dean said. "I don't know how."

Lem Banker saw Sonny a day or two before Christmas, when Sonny and Geraldine came by to visit. On the day after the holiday, Geraldine left town to visit her mother in St. Louis. She returned home at about half past eight on the night of January 5, 1971, to the smell of death.

Sonny Liston lay back in his underwear on the upholstered bench at the foot of his velvet-covered bed, his feet on the floor, his shoes and socks beside them. According to the report from the Clark County coroner's office, "Decedent was in a bloated condition and gas was escaping from his nose. Blood appeared to have come from the nose and it appeared that blood had soaked and dried in the bedspread at the decedent's head. Decedent's fingers appeared dehydrated."

According to the sheriff's office, a quarter-ounce of heroin was found in the kitchen. There was marijuana in the pocket of Liston's trousers. There was a glass of vodka on a nightstand, and on a dresser a .38 in a holster and a wooden cross. The television was on. On the basement bar lay Sonny's hat and the December 28 *Las Vegas Sun*. Papers from the 29th lay stacked on the porch.

Curiously, though news of Liston's death was published throughout the country on January 6, no mention of it was made in the *Las Vegas Sun* until January 7. A day later, the *Sun* ran a small piece under the heading NARCO AGENT LAST PERSON KNOWN TO HAVE SEEN SONNY LISTON ALIVE. According to the *Sun*, an unnamed undercover narcotics agent had visited Liston at home on December 30. The alleged sources of this information were "sheriff's detectives" who "refused to divulge the nature or reason" for the visit, "but did say Liston was in apparently good health."

Puncture marks were reportedly found on Liston's arms, and initially the cause of death was attributed to a drug overdose. After much controversy and further study, however, the death was reattributed to natural causes: lung congestion brought on by poor oxygen and nutrient blood supply to the heart muscles.

Some accepted this. Some believed that Sonny did indeed die on dope. But most of Liston's close friends cited his phobia of needles, a trait which had been evident as recently as the previous November, when he had been hospitalized. Chuck Wepner, who had fought Liston six months before, told me that Liston definitely didn't box like a junkie.

Many of Liston's pals say that he was murdered. "A friend of mine called me, said, 'Man, they found Sonny dead,'" one recalled. "I said, 'I'll be damned, they got to him.'" On the Strip, in joints in Chicago and St. Louis and New York, you hear many things: That Sonny was involved in a big dope deal. Or a shylocking operation. All sorts of things. It is necessary to remember that killing Sonny would have been no mean feat. The moment his killers started toward him, as somebody said, "that woulda been all she wrote." The consensus is that they put something in his drink, then gave him a hotshot. Dope, shylocking. Whatever it was, it came down to money.

Lem Banker, who is convinced that Sonny was murdered, spoke of an ex-cop imprisoned in Carson City who claimed that Ash Resnick offered him a contract to kill Sonny. The story is that Ash and Sonny had a big falling out. Over money. Banker doesn't believe the story. "Ash didn't have Sonny killed," he said. "Ash did a lot of things, but he wasn't a murderer."

Just as someone in Chicago had told me to look to the East, someone in St. Louis told me to look to the calendar.

You see, the answer—if there is one—may lie in the timing. If a deal with the Muslims had indeed been made whereby Liston was to receive in secret a percentage of all of Ali's future earnings, that deal would not have been worth much. Since early 1967, Ali had been inactive. There were no earnings. But in late 1970, a deal was brokered for an unheard-of $5 million fight with Joe Frazier.

By the time that fight was fought a few months later, Sonny lay beneath the Las Vegas dirt of the Garden of Peace at Paradise Memorial Gardens. A bronze plaque bears his name and the words A MAN.

The mystery of a death serves only to distract us comfortably from the mysteries inside ourselves. Ultimately, the true cause of Sonny's death was the mystery in him.

"He's dead, that's all," as Davey Pear said. As another man said, he was born that way. □

Gore

CONTINUED FROM PAGE factions in both parties, and faces a major battle in the Senate—will be a vulnerability in his campaign for the presidency in 2000.

But like all born explainers, Gore trades more in lecture than in conversation. "The son of a bitch thinks he knows everything," says one man who has occasionally advised him.

Yet there is, finally, something moving about Gore's passion for science. It gives him the lit-up quality of any [illegible] willing to embrace something [illegible] and points up how flat the [illegible] world seems in comp[illegible]

at moments like this, knowing that his political ambitions are two generations old, gives special resonance—poignancy, even—to something Bob Squier told me. "We've talked more about my father than we have about his," said the man who may be Gore's most important political adviser. "Because mine was a scientist."

Albert Arnold Gore Jr. was not *literally* groomed from birth for the presidency; during at least some of Al Gore's childhood, the father still held that ambition for himself.

Albert Gore Sr., who served in the House for 14 years and in the Senate for 18, was a proud southern liberal at a time when the l-word was not the worst thing you could call a Democratic politician. Gore is still revered by southern progressives for his early opposition to the Vietnam War, his largely principled record on civil rights, and a tax-the-rich populism that made him a gadfly among the nabobs of the Senate Finance Committee. With his rich oratory and mane of white hair, he was a senior senator out of Frank Capra. But he also had an edge of the country boy: in his early races he played the fiddle to draw crowds to his speeches.

The presidential bug bit Albert Gore in 1956, when he narrowly lost out to his fellow Tennessean Estes Kefauver to become Adlai Stevenson's running mate and he was often mentioned as a possible candidate for the presidency or the vice

presidency in 1960. But he never ran, and there was something stubborn in him that repeatedly made him sour his own alliances. Jack Robinson Sr., a former aide of Gore's, told a documentary-film maker in 1993, "I'd look up on the board and see a vote that was 97 to 3 and I'd think, One of those [3] is going to be him."

It was a stubbornness that hurt him badly in 1970, when he faced Bill Brock, a challenger handpicked by the Nixon White House in a bitter race still seen by southern liberals as a watershed. Gore was hammered with negative ads portraying him as out of touch with Tennesseans on race, on school prayer, on Vietnam. But he showed a stiff-necked refusal to modernize his approach to politics. He was Albert Gore, and he was their senator, dammit, and that should be enough. In response, Tennessee elected Brock by 43,000 votes.

Father and son both cried the night of the father's loss. And the senator told his faithful, in conceding defeat, "The truth shall rise again."

Many heard that as a reference to the next Albert Gore. Ever since the younger man entered politics, his father has visibly hungered for a Gore presidency. In 1992, when Gore was tapped to be Bill Clinton's running mate, Albert Gore Sr. exulted to *The New York Times,* "We raised him for it."

As if this paternal legacy were not goad enough to succeed, there was also Gore's mother, Pauline, who is, according to many people who know the Gores, the shrewder, tougher half of the couple. "If Pauline were Al's age today, it would be her running for president," says *The Tennessean*'s current editor, Frank Sutherland. "Pauline Gore may be the smartest politician I know."

"Young Al is a lot more like his mother than his daddy," says Court TV anchor and managing editor Fred Graham, a family friend. "She has a more subtle and complex mentality than his father." According to someone who knows Gore very well, it was Pauline who conceived the idea that their son might be groomed to be a president. "It was the father's dream, but his mother's vision. His father had it in his heart, but his mother had it in her head."

I ask Gore if it's true that he is more his mother's than his father's child. "Well, I think that's a very perceptive question," he answers, in his affirming-teacher voice. "It tells me that you have done a lot of work. Because most people just stop at: To what extent is this person his father's son? And how does this explain his total being? It's just so formulaic. The other is also formulaic, but it's closer to the truth."

Among other things, the mother taught her son that there were ways the father was *not* to be emulated, making clear the costs of Albert's showy love of principle. "Al by nature is more of a pragmatist than his father," Pauline told an interviewer in 1988. "As am I. I tried to persuade Albert [senior] not to butt at a stone wall just for the sheer joy of butting."

The St. Albans School yearbook of 1965 has a line drawing of graduating senior Al Gore standing on a pedestal; under his photograph runs a quotation from Anatole France: "People who have no weaknesses are terrible."

"He was a stuffed shirt, even then; he was not a kid," says a schoolmate who played on the football team that Gore captained. "He would try to be inspirational, and we would all roll our eyes." Classmates sometimes referred to him as Ozymandias, after the arrogant ruler of the Shelley poem, who cried, "Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!" Another schoolmate notes, "That suggested the schoolboy's intuition that this was a gigantic figure in our midst. But that there was something wooden, artificial, unreal, monumental about him."

This quality—Gore's square-jawed, opaque perfection—is described by people from every era of his life, from fourth grade on. Roy Neel says with a shrug, "You're either attracted to him or, if you're a certain kind of person, you're repelled by him."

When Al was born, on March 31, 1948, 10 years after his sister, Nancy, his arrival was announced on the front page of *The Tennessean.* "We had almost despaired of having another child, much less a son," Pauline told an interviewer years later. "So he has kind of always been a miracle to us." By most reports, the family observed an almost perfect division of roles. Nancy was fun-loving, charming, rebellious. Al was dutiful, sober, and good. "They were opposites," Pauline Gore told the *Los Angeles Times* in 1988. "As far as Nancy was concerned, rules were made to be broken. But Al was fairly much a conformist." Pauline has often described her son in this faintly withering light—telling *The New York Times,* for example, that he had always been "determined to please."

"He didn't really need any discipline—he knew what he was supposed to do, and he did it," says Edd Blair, a childhood friend from Carthage. "All of us, our mothers *loved* him."

> "Gore is taken seriously because he's seen as the president's partner. The minute he's seen as another candidate, he gives up that status."

Between them, Albert and Pauline gave their son a thoroughly political upbringing. Here is a jug-eared "little Al" in *The Saturday Evening Post,* at four, riding the Jeep on the farm with father, mother, and sister. Here he is in an Indian headdress at six, in *The Knoxville News-Sentinel,* in a corny feature about how he talked his father into buying him a bow and arrow. Here he is at 22, in uniform, in a political ad designed to head off the loss that looms before the senior Gore in his final campaign. "Son," the father tells his boy, "always love your country."

Home was two places—the farm in Middle Tennessee where the Gores raised cattle and grew tobacco, and Apartment 809 in the Fairfax Hotel, on Embassy Row. On the farm, where he spent his summers and school breaks, his father insisted that he work as hard as the hired labor to earn his pocket money. But in Washington there were different lessons to learn. There he absorbed conversations with Clark Clifford, William Fulbright, Sam Rayburn. At 14, he was allowed to listen in while President Kennedy sought the senior Gore's help in pressuring the

steel industry to roll back a price increase.

"To ask how he regarded his father's career connotes distance, where there was none," notes Frank Sutherland. "Al was in it, he was part of it." And when his father lost his final election, "the senator didn't lose that election, the *family* did."

Indeed, when the vice president discusses his father's campaigns, a curious thing happens. He is telling the story of his father's first Senate race, in which his opponent—the powerful but doddering chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Kenneth McKellar—posted billboards all over Tennessee saying, THINKING FELLER/VOTE FOR McKELLAR. "And my mother said, 'Here's what we're going to do. . . . Everywhere there's a sign, put another one right underneath it,' which we did: 'THINK SOME MORE/VOTE FOR GORE.'"

We did. Gore, at that time, was four years old.

He learned from the start to serve two constituencies, silently containing whatever tension this stirred in him. When he was at St. Albans, he rarely spoke of what he did when he vanished, the day after term's end, to Tennessee. And in Carthage, "when he was around us, he never did mention his life in Washington," says Gordon Thompson, the son of the couple who managed the Gores' farm. "He brought himself down on our level. Because he knew, to get along with us, he had to."

Gore's parents sometimes left him with the Thompsons for long periods; when he was in second grade, he lived with them from Christmas until the end of the school year, sharing a bed with Gordon. They were the first of a series of surrogates from whom he drew a needed warmth.

While Gore has been lampooned as "Prince Albert," product of a silver-spoon childhood, the reality was more complicated. Both his parents had come of age in the Depression-ridden rural South: his mother, in West Tennessee, where her father's general store went bust in the Depression; his father, in the hills of Middle Tennessee, where, although his family owned land, he had to work his way through college, stopping and starting while he earned his tuition. Albert and Pauline met when he was attending night law school at the Nashville Y.M.C.A. and she was working on [illegible] way through Vanderbilt law school [illegible]

ly raised themselves up out of very simple origins," notes David Halberstam, who was an apprentice journalist in Tennessee in the late 50s and knew the family well.

The couple's economic circumstances gradually improved—Albert would become rich after he left the Senate, in the employ of industrialist Armand Hammer. But the senior Gores' correspondence is full of suggestions that, when Al was young, the family's upper-middle-class existence was a stretch. "I may be the poorest senator up here," Albert Gore wrote in a letter to a supporter shortly after his first Senate victory, and Pauline wrote to a friend that there was no way the family could afford a new car. She shopped zealously for bargain antiques and carefully noted the stock number of some shoes she tried on at Bergdorf's so that she might find a way to get them wholesale. Although the Fairfax Hotel later became the Ritz-Carlton, it was not a posh place at the time Gore was growing up; in any case, the apartment was in their reach only because the hotel was owned by a cousin.

It was nothing like a life of poverty, but it explains why his parents' hopes for him were something more ardent than the casual aspirations of the privileged, who can assume the success of their children. A sense of life's difficulty—of the narrow margins by which families rise and fall—was a part of the family's bedrock culture, and childhood marked Al Gore permanently with a sense that mistakes are unaffordable.

By the time Gore was admitted to Harvard on a scholarship, his lessons were complete. John Tyson, an economic-development entrepreneur in Washington, remembers meeting the future vice president when Gore knocked on his door in a freshman dorm in Harvard Yard and introduced himself as a candidate for a seat on the freshman council—a post to which a roommate of Tyson's also aspired. "Al had a big smile and good handshake, and looked you square in the eye," recalls Tyson. "My roommate at that time said, 'Well, it's not fair. He's a professional already.'"

But something happened on his way to the forum. The 60s happened, turning Harvard upside down and sending Gore to Vietnam, as a military journalist, after an anguished decision to enlist that combined his father's political interest with his own guilt at the thought of evading the draft in a pool as small as Carthage. And he absorbed some of his father's bitterness about the older man's defeat.

So instead of jumping right into politics [illegible] returning from Vietnam, Gore took a [illegible] *The Tennessean*—on the condition that he *not* be assigned to cover politics. Instead he plunged happily into covering hillbilly festivals and burger-eating contests, writing obits and police stories. He was married by now, to Mary Elizabeth "Tipper" Aitcheson, the girl he had met at a dance in high school; they had their first daughter in 1973.

He was, by all accounts, a talented and hard-driving reporter. "He had an intense pride of authorship," says Roy Neel, who was at the time a sportswriter at a rival paper. "If he was going to be associated with something, if it was going to have his name on it, it better be damned near perfect." Gradually Gore found himself lured—like any other young reporter drawn by ambition to the prestige stories—onto the government beat. His work led to the indictment of one Metro Council member for soliciting a bribe, and he covered the arrest and indictment of a second council member on a similar charge.

Some of those around Gore believed his protestations that he had lost interest in politics. But at the back of the newsroom, the more hard-bitten reporters on staff knew a racehorse when they saw one, even in a pasture full of mules. "When we didn't have enough to do, we would plot Al's political future for him," says Frank Sutherland. "When we *really* didn't have enough to do, we'd figure out his path to the presidency. He'd go, 'Oh God, don't do *that*.'"

Even as he fought it, the training of a lifetime was gradually working its way to the surface. Gore enrolled in law school in 1974. And in 1976, when the congressman who held his father's old seat in the House retired, Gore decided in the space of an instant to plunge back into politics.

"On, like, Friday afternoon Al was—his hair was a little bit long, and he was working away as a reporter," says Doug Hall, who was a colleague at *The Tennessean* and, much later, a Gore adviser. "At that point, I don't think he owned a suit. But on Monday morning he had a navy-blue suit and a haircut, and was announcing for Congress."

This story, of his cleansing detour through the newspaper business, was the story that CarefulMan was bent on telling at the start of our interview. And he told it at length, speaking for eight minutes straight: "The point of all that," he concluded, "is that the easy story to write about someone who grows up in a political family who then goes into politics is, well, this person formed an intent, a plan, in childhood, and traveled down this path in rote fashion. The more complicated truth in my case is that those

seeds were planted when I was young, but I *rejected* it. And then, after many years, came back to it on my own terms."

He won a close race in the primary, in which he forbade his father to make appearances but benefited greatly from the family's old contacts and donors. ("I don't think he would have won without those resources," says Roy Neel. "But after that it was all him.") It was the last tight race he would ever have in Tennessee: he won the general election handily, as well as his next three House bids and two Senate elections, in 1984 and 1990.

From the start, he cut a different figure in politics: more studious, more intellectual than his congressional brethren, trailing in his wake a whiff of aloofness or—some thought—contempt. "He doesn't know as many members, or have the personal relationships that you would expect for someone who had spent that time up there," says Gore's friend Debbie Dingell, a General Motors executive who is married to Representative John Dingell.

It would remain striking, throughout his career, how much he continued to define himself by those five years he worked in journalism—describing politics as "an extension of being a journalist." His specialty, in the House, was the oversight hearing, in which he would expose some malfeasance in need of punishment or regulation—in the pharmaceutical industry, among makers of baby formula, by the dumpers of toxic waste. "It's just like being a reporter," he told friends, "only you've got subpoena power."

He had found a way to meet his duty while calling it something else.

Twenty years later his pleasure at his early career in journalism is still palpable. Sutherland, now a close friend, introduced him as the keynote speaker at the April 1996 luncheon of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. With a rare lightness of touch, Gore treated the gathered barons of journalism to his reminiscences of being a wet-behind-the-ears reporter who fell for the oldest hazing trick in the book: one day he got a call about the death of one Trebla Erog, a Swedish gynecologist. Failing to recognize his own name, spelled backward, he conscientiously wrote up Erog's obituary, right down to his membership in the Knights of Columbus.

Gore's tale, and his self-deflating manner of telling it, had the editors in stitches. Then suddenly he turned on a dime and began his formal address on the subject of "reinventing government." His voice slowed; his face lost its mobility; the assembled listeners fell into the attentive stupor of children in the last hour of the school day. Seeing Gore so assiduously separate these two pieces of his world was like watching someone holding at arm's length two potent chemicals, each benign on its own but liable to explode if brought into contact with the other.

> "The focus on Gore flowed from a simple fact: he had made many more one-on-one appeals to donors than Clinton had."

Friends swear that under his throttled, somewhat wintry mien, Gore is an emotional man. His family life provides plenty of evidence that this is true: his marriage to Tipper is almost universally regarded in Washington as the rare political marriage that has retained some fire after 27 years. "Gore and Tipper really are like teenagers in love—a lot of handholding, a lot of touching," says a friend. And he has lived out a real commitment to his four children—Karenna, 24, Kristin, 20, Sarah, 19, and Albert III, 15. Only the youngest remains at home (the three girls all chose to follow their father to Harvard, and Karenna is now a law student at Columbia), but for much of his vice-presidency, Gore blocked out great holes in his schedule—for field-hockey, football, and lacrosse games, back-to-school nights and sports banquets—that were genuinely off-limits to all the other claimants on his time.

The Gores have worked hard to maintain a zone of privacy, even within the formality of the vice president's mansion. They go to movies—quietly, slipping into theaters at the last minute to take up seats reserved by the Secret Service—and give informal dinners for friends. They have kept the two houses they own elsewhere, which speak volumes about their traditionalism. One is the Arlington, Virginia, Tudor house (worth more than $500,000 today) that Tipper grew up in. The other is their modest farm in Carthage, where the family spends vacation time. It faces Al's parents' house across the narrow Caney Fork River.

Yet Gore's efforts to show his emotional side, through speeches about such personal tragedies as his sister's 1984 death from lung cancer, have evoked mostly cynicism in his listeners. He is strangely full of false notes at times like those, deaf to the effects he has on others. In a recent chat with *Time* magazine, for example, he suggested that Erich Segal had based the romance depicted in *Love Story* on Al and Tipper Gore. The claim promptly touched off the kind of pointless minor controversy that is fast becoming Gore's signature. For Segal denied it, saying that any small resemblance between Gore and the novel's Oliver Barrett IV had to do with their struggles to escape the career expectations of their domineering fathers. In any case, the boast was vintage Gore: the least hip testimonial one can imagine to a passionate love life.

And his familiar emotional role—Al the dutiful, the even-tempered, the man without weaknesses—is still with him. Hearing people describe Al and Tipper together, one can't help being reminded of Al and his sister. "Tipper is the more emotional of the pair, the more sensitive to feelings," says Frank Sutherland. Her job is watering the family's relationships with others, reminding him of the human side of life.

In turn, Gore's job is to be the steady one. Tipper is seen by friends and associates as far more volatile than her husband—up and happy one day, withdrawn the next. "Tipper is really a very complicated piece of machinery," says a good friend, who perceives an element of solicitude in Gore's attentiveness to his wife. "It's as if there's an unpredictable

quality only Al knows, in Tipper. You get the feeling he's the thermostat of the couple, keeping the temperature level."

In becoming Clinton's vice president, Gore joined another partnership that defines him as a steadying force. Political associates repeatedly described to me the vice president's ability to lance Clinton's legendary temper. White House press secretary Mike McCurry says he never allows the scheduling of a presidential press conference until he knows that Gore will be in town for the "pre-brief," in which aides help the president anticipate questions—and allow him to vent his exasperation in advance. "Clinton just spews this stuff out, and Gore says, 'Yeah, that's what they want to see—they want to see those veins popping out on the side of your neck. Your advisers will all tell you you can't do that, but they're just a bunch of wimps. So just go ahead and say that.'"

In exchange, Clinton has tried to convey to Gore some of his own ease at politics. "The president will encourage the vice president to open himself up a little more in public," says a Gore adviser. "He will say, in a meeting, 'You're being a little too abstract here, Al.'"

Just once, Gore cast off the tight emotional camouflage he has worn since his youth. In 1989, at age 41, he was still assimilating the failure of his presidential run when his six-year-old son dashed out of his grasp one day and was struck by a car. Albert nearly died, and it took extensive surgery and physical therapy to restore him to health. The event was a violent dividing line in Gore's life, loosing a lifetime of emotional repression. Gore launched "an intensive search for truths about myself and my life," as he wrote in the book he started a year later, *Earth in the Balance*—a search that entailed questioning his entire political education. Friends believe he was encouraged by his wife, who has a master's degree in psychology and has recently made mental health her chief public cause. In the course of Albert's treatment, the Gores participated in family-therapy sessions.

What Gore found was his missing childhood. With the help of a psychology professor at the University of Tennessee, he explored the whole theme of family dysfunction, becoming fascinated by the Swiss psychoanalyst Alice Miller's [illegible] *the Gifted Child* [illegible] which parents [illegible] filled dreams and narcissistic needs on their children. A 1993 article by Katherine Boo in *The Washington Post Magazine* reported his deep interest in the book, the way he urged it on friends. And it is easy to see why. The personality type laid out in Miller's slim book, as she describes the children of such parents, might be a road map to the psyche of Al Gore: there is the will to achieve as a way of earning love; the development of the intellect over the emotions; the severe repression of the true self. The child, Miller wrote, "develops in such a way that he reveals only what is expected of him, and fuses so completely with what he reveals that—until he comes to analysis—one could scarcely have guessed how much more there is to him."

In *Earth in the Balance,* Gore hints at the passionate new connections that had been made in his mind. In a chapter titled "Dysfunctional Civilization," he spins out, for 11 pages, a lesson on dysfunctional families as a metaphor for civilization's abuse of the earth, using the fervent overstatement of one writing in a new voice. "And because [the developing child] doubts his worth and authenticity," Gore writes, "he begins controlling his inner experience—smothering spontaneity, masking emotion, diverting creativity into robotic routine, and distracting an awareness of all he is missing with an unconvincing replica of what he might have been."

The chapter is fascinating in how vividly it shows his burdens. It is, in miniature, the story told by the entire book, a dense 408 pages that range over biology, theology, geology, psychology, and history, among other disciplines: that it wasn't enough for Al Gore to save his son, or to save himself. These impulses must all be in service of something larger—a drive that is at once self-negating and grandiose. There is the operatic tendency to see the world as a reflection of his own struggle and the solipsistic certainty that a big change in his own life (his response to Albert's brush with death) might reasonably pave the way for a change in the life of the world. "It is that experience of personal healing, in turn, which made it possible for me to write this book and which convinced me that the healing of the global environment depends initially upon our ability to grieve for the deep tragedy that our collision with the earth's ecological system is causing."

There has never been a clearer expression of how importantly, with what a sense of assigned burden, Gore goes about living life. Yet Gore's hunger to understand [illegible] is also one of the most attractive things about him—and a true rarity in a political culture that fears nothing more than sincerity. There is no telling where that impulse might have taken him, if allowed to flower. As it was, this passage in his life taught him to spend more time with his family; it led him to pass up the 1992 race for the presidency; it made him resolve to ditch some of the caution that had rendered his 1988 candidacy so full of position papers but empty of conviction.

And then Bill Clinton called to offer him the vice-presidency—called him back to the realm of performance and duty. That other Gore slipped again behind the mask.

The life of the vice president mirrors, uncannily, the life of the dutiful son in a political family. The vice president is shipped around the country like a package, handed from city to city by ever shifting groups of agents and advance people and local volunteers: more pictures to be snapped, more hands to be shaken. To a man with Gore's background, it must be as uncomfortable as the most painful history can be, and as comfortable as home. He can live there forever, as long as he doesn't have to give himself—his real self—over to its demands.

So that is what Al Gore is up to when he vanishes behind his mask: he is hiding in plain sight.

The Gore who remains before our eyes—that proper, sober, who-me? figure who stood at the center of the campaign-finance scandals—is left to contend with an enormous irony. His discomfiture with politics was widely seen as the reason it was so hard for him to deal with the political chaos he had suddenly created. Less closely examined was how it got him into the mess in the first place.

How was it that Gore, with his long record of caution, suffered so much more damage than Clinton in the finance scandals? By last fall, Gore's poll numbers had plummeted, while Clinton sailed undamaged through the storm. In one September poll, only 34 percent of Americans had a "favorable impression" of the vice president, whereas 59 percent felt positively about the president. Part of the reason, to be sure, was political sport: there was far less fun for reporters and Republicans in rooting out fund-raising violations by a man who had already run his last race. And the coverage of Gore got its traction in part from a widespread sense that it would be bigger news (or a deeper hypocrisy) if the squeaky-clean Gore had cut some ethical corners.

But the focus on Gore also flowed

from a simple fact: he had made many more one-on-one appeals to donors than Clinton had. In sum, Gore followed Clinton's lead in promising to call potential donors, but Clinton ducked, neglecting to make most of his calls, while Gore duly embarked on some 45 calls.

Never, according to Gore's closest aides, did Gore sit down and systematically examine the underlying question of whether it was a good idea for the president or vice president to make such calls, from the White House or anywhere else. Because while Gore cares a great deal about probity, there is something even more deeply ingrained, something that matters just a little bit more: meeting the test; bearing the burden; doing his duty. In a time period bracketed by the Democrats' disastrous losses in the fall of 1994 and the presidential election of 1996, a crisis mentality gripped the Clinton White House. They were desperate to raise money for a massive series of ads before the fall campaign. And it was simply in Gore's nature to salute and start marching.

If Gore ever once let up at this—if he ever exempted himself, or let himself slack off on the distasteful parts, the way Clinton sometimes does—it might threaten the whole structure of his vaunted discipline. To Gore, most of politics is eating spinach; how was he to notice if all those phone calls left a bad taste in his mouth? Perhaps the most revealing thing he said at his strange press conference, about halfway through, was "I felt like I was doing the right thing."

This is why the fund-raising scandal, even if Gore has successfully put it in the past, hints at the central question that will dog his candidacy and, if he succeeds at that, his presidency. He knows the difference between right and wrong, but does he know the difference between right and duty?

It's an open question, even according to some of his admirers, who see in Gore a basic decency, a concern with right outcomes that far outshines Clinton's. "I don't know . . . whether the [Boy Scout] kind of thing in him would make him say, 'This far and no farther.' Or whether the kind of literal side to him that says, 'Well, the rule book says you have to make these compromises,' whether that would get him to just deal things away," says one former colleague from the Clinton White House. "Would he go, 'You know what? Forget it—I can't do that.' Or would he go, 'That's the way the game is played'?"

For now, Gore's greatest political strength continues to be the vice-presidency. "He's taken seriously because he's seen as the president's partner," notes Mike McCurry. "The minute he's seen as another Democratic candidate out there grubbing for delegates, he gives up that status." Gore continues in high favor with Clinton, who fully understands the tricky calculus that faces a vice president running as a "New Democrat" against a likely opponent such as Representative Dick Gephardt, who has already staked out the issues that most appeal to the more traditional segments of the party, which dominate the nomination process. On trade issues, for example—where Clinton's free-trade policies are anathema to the unions—Clinton and Gore have agreed that Gore should take a lower profile now than he has in the past.

But there are disadvantages to being the front-runner so far in advance of the campaign. For at least another year Gore will remain the biggest political story in the country, facing a Washington press corps starved for significance. And Gore's stock is still very low among the herd-borne beasts who make national opinion. His virtues are not virtues they care for very much, and his weaknesses are of the kind they can smell from 10 miles off.

And this is a recipe—high stakes, huge publicity, plenty of time to think a thing to death—that plays to Gore's worst tendencies. Will he spend this time shedding the cautions that constrain him? In order to do that, he would have to trust himself, innately; he would have to believe in his instincts—in the still, small voice that could have told any other politician in America that "no controlling legal authority" was a mouthful of weasel words. He would have to touch the stuff of voters' lives, and be touched by them in turn.

Or will he double and triple his guard, and circle back and double it again? As he boards Air Force Two for another leg of his journey, it is hard to believe that the habits of a lifetime can be changed. He springs up the last step of the airplane stairs, landing in a jaunty little pirouette that brings his wing tips smartly together and his body to attention, facing out. Head held high, he raises one hand aloft in the standard, statesmanly wave goodbye: right, to the phalanx of highway patrolmen who have helped with his motorcade; straight ahead, to the little clot of ground crew and volunteers that awaits his departure; left, to the empty tarmac.

He waves with equal warmth in every direction, whether or not there is anyone waving back. □

McNally

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 143 mustn't." (Among McNally's favorite bathroom features is a brown water stain that is currently developing on the ceiling above the tub: "I don't know where that came from," he says, "but I *like* it!")

Four years ago, in the wake of his divorce from restaurateur Lynn Wagenknecht (now majority owner of Odeon, Cafe Luxembourg, and Nell's, and half-owner of Bodega), McNally broke through a wall and took over apartment No. 24, effectively doubling his living space. (And quadrupling his rent, which is now $2,000, way up from $500. The original figure was $250 in 1977.) "Adding on to the apartment was some sort of soul-searching for me after my divorce," he says. "It helped me reconstruct my life." McNally now has a total of three bedrooms, two of which are used by his children—Harry, 13, Sophie, 12, and Isabelle, 8—who divide their time between parents. The kids' rooms are carefully "undesigned" to match the rest of the place: the walls are glazed and nicotined to imperfection, and the lighting is rosy, emanating from brass parchment-shaded sconces. In the largest bedroom—shared by Harry and Isabelle—there are bunk beds, which McNally had copied from sailors' berths he saw on a 19th-century ship in Mystic, Connecticut. To add character, he coated the wood with milk paint, a substance that crackles soon after application.

Almost everything in McNally's apartment that is not custom-crafted has been gathered over the years at flea markets: well-worn Persian and Turkish rugs, antique mirrors, dressers, old pine doors, 50s-era lamps—even his collection of dark-hued mid-20th-century paintings, which are displayed on the walls of the living room and kitchen. (McNally also takes his Jeep Cherokee up to the antiques shows in Brimfield, Massachusetts, where he shops for a 1910 Martha's Vineyard house he bought in 1992.) "I go to Paris a lot," he says, "to the flea markets at Clignancourt and Vanves. I like looking at pictures and paintings at flea markets as much as anything else. A lot

McNally

of my paintings are English . . . done during the Blitz. I like German Expressionism. I like clusters of buildings . . . industrial landscapes. I've got a few pictures which seem to be out of an F. W. Murnau film, with buildings collapsing." (The reference to German cinema is not surprising; McNally has directed two independent films: the second, *Far from Berlin,* was filmed in Germany and the first, *End of the Night,* was shown at Cannes in 1990.)

For all the layers, textures, and antiques in McNally's rooms, there is a kind of Edward Hopper minimalism to the place. Wall sconces, of which there are 20, nearly outnumber the pieces of furniture. In the living room the only place to sit is a large white couch ("from Shabby Chic, I'm ashamed to say"), and the TV set facing the couch is plunked down on a tiny rattan café chair. And you can't get more spare than the 8-by-10-foot master bedroom, which has only a mattress, box spring, and two dressers.

But if there were any more furniture there wouldn't be room to move around. "I am somewhat embarrassed by how small my apartment is," McNally confides. "But you know this building was, at one time, filled with Italian immigrants. And I met an old man who actually grew up here, and he said that a family of 10 once lived in just a part of my tiny space." □

Danes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 112 is able to fill that stillness—as her idol, Meryl Streep, does—with a wealth of emotion. "Leo [DiCaprio] once said to me on the set of *Romeo & Juliet,* 'How can you be so still?'" Danes remembers. "He likes to run around on the set and gear himself up. I said, 'How can you be so active?' I am able, yes, to focus steadily. *Stealthily.*"

"There is a sadness to Claire," says Gabriel Byrne. "I don't know if 'sadness' is too strong a word, but there's certainly something deep within her that preoccupies her. I don't know if that's just the age she's at, or whether it's an inherent part of her personality. But, for every quality you get in her, you almost get the exact opposite quality. She's like a prism. Depending on which way she hits the light, you get a different Claire. She's tremendously generous and kind as a person. Yet at the same time I feel that she has a need in her now to be acknowledged for who she is—as a *woman.*"

"I first met her at an audition for *On the Road,* which we were trying to make into a film at one point," says Francis Ford Coppola, referring to Jack Kerouac's screed on the Beat Generation. "If she were a pianist or a harpist or a flutist, she'd be considered a prodigy. . . . I don't know if it's just her intelligence that does it, but she really *understands.* There's no question, of course, that she's a young girl and has all the innocence and enthusiasm of being young, but at the same time there's something very wise about her."

Danes has performed two great literary death scenes in the last few years—Juliet's, and Beth's in *Little Women.* [illegible] had to cope with [illegible] real life?

"My [illegible] dad's father. [illegible] says evenly. "My dad has dealt with a lot of death. His mom—whom I'm named after—died when he was 10. So he's really wrestled with that. He's still dealing with that today. I understand it vicariously through him. The double suicide was four years ago. My grandfather's wife, Ilse, his third, had Alzheimer's disease. They made an agreement when she was still well that when she got to the point that she couldn't function properly they were going to die together. That was pretty traumatic. It only recently began to sink in. . . . I knew when it happened that I was not going to be able to accept it or understand it for a long time. We didn't have the memorial service until two years ago. The entire family had procrastinated; none of us had dealt with it. We went and threw the ashes in a stream in Connecticut. I had been so mad at my grandfather for doing it. I thought it was selfish of him. Up until that point, I didn't realize what a huge thing it would be. But I just burst into tears. *Completely crumbled.* More for my dad than anything else."

"Have you ever seen him cry?"

"My dad?" she asks, laughing a little. "My God! My dad cries *all the time.*"

"Your mom?"

"She doesn't cry that much."

Carla and Chris Danes, still in their early 40s, are now going through the separation anxiety that all parents suffer when a child grows up and leaves home for the first time. Since Carla has served as one of her daughter's managers, the anxieties that she and her husband are experiencing are multiplied for a variety of reasons. Now that their daughter has reached the age of consent, she has chosen to make her own way in show business. Second, her wealth, greater than most people's, is especially [illegible] when measured against that of others [illegible] age. (Danes is now getting about $3 [illegible] per picture.) Finally, and most im[illegible]nt, she is moving back to New York, leaving her beloved Chevy Blazer behind and putting a whole continent between herself and her parents. She has, in fact, reportedly just plopped down about $1 million for a loft in SoHo around the corner from where she spent her childhood. The only solace for her parents is that her 25-year-old brother, Asa, a former UNICEF worker in Africa who is applying to law school, is living in New York and can help keep an eye on her.

"My new space is *totally* raw," she excitedly tells me. "I'm working with this architect my parents used when they renovated our loft *countless* times. It always seemed there was construction going on."

"Do you know how lucky you are?" I ask. "You're 18 years old and talking about working with your architect."

"I'm *fully* conscious of how lucky I am. I've gotten so much resentment just looking for this apartment. The people showing me real estate were rolling their eyes. It's unbelievable how much money you can make in this business. I've just gotten my first A.T.M. card, and am figuring out how money works. I'm dealing with such huge numbers that my perspective is way off. It's *scary,*" she says, sighing heavily.

"It's hard to be 18 and rich," I say.

"It's not *that* hard," she says. "It's harder to be 18 and poor."

"You're one of the lucky few of your generation, Claire, who still have parents who are not divorced," I say, guiding her back to the subject of Carla and Chris, who have ignored repeated requests to be interviewed about their daughter. "That must make all this a little easier."

"That's a gift . . . yeah . . . but . . . well, it's difficult," she admits. "I'm separated from them now, so there are a lot of emotions—some *very* volatile—that we're all kind of grappling with. I'm sure that parents can't help but feel rejected when a parent—I mean, when a *child*—leaves. That, in and of itself, is like a divorce."

"That was Freudian," I say. "Do you

feel like the parent at times because you're the major breadwinner in the family? You obviously make a hell of a lot more money than they do."

"*Mmm* . . . 'when a parent leaves' . . . *mmm,*" she quietly repeats. "That's interesting. It's hard for me to take responsibility for leaving. . . . It's tough to talk about my mom right now, because we're both in the process of pulling away. It's very, very odd. . . . And, yeah, it's strange to make more money than your parents do. You can't help but have it be an issue when you employ your parents. It's awkward. I'm in a transitional period right now—but I don't know when you're *not,* in life."

"Hey, Claire!" shouts a teenager. "You forgot your bra!"

Danes and I have just disembarked from our log after riding Splash Mountain. Danes, her wet T-shirt pointing due north, does not blush. Her Dr. Scholl's, however, pick up speed now that she realizes she's been recognized. "Have you noticed there's a lot of death imagery in this park?" she whispers as we later leave the Haunted Mansion and make our way toward the exit.

Herds of girls are now descending as word spreads that Danes is in the park. Danes signs autograph after autograph and poses for a photo or two. "They just like me because I got to kiss Leo in *Romeo & Juliet,*" she says. "I have to pee so badly, but I can't go in the bathroom here now," she adds. "They'll all follow me in. I'll hold it till we get back to town."

Halfway home, however, her discomfort is obvious. "How much longer until we get off this freeway?" she asks.

"We're almost there," says the driver.

The car finally pulls up to a Denny's on the farther reaches of Sunset Boulevard. Danes hurries inside. When she returns, there is a sad, perplexed expression on her face.

"Don't tell me there were teenage girls in there too," I say.

"No. Just a homeless woman."

"Did she recognize you?"

"No. Well . . . yes. She thought I was somebody else. I was somebody to her, but it wasn't me."

Danes looks out the car window. Frowning, she laughs. □

Credits

Fashion

Cover: Claire Danes's Christian Dior by John Galliano dress and jacket from Christian Dior, Beverly Hills; for Jutta Neumann shoes, call 212-982-7048.
Page 32: Bottom, Claire Danes's Jill Stuart dress from Scoop, N.Y.C.
Page 36: Ingrid Sischy styled by Kathy Kalafut for Susan Price; shirt by Comme des Garçons, from Comme des Garçons, N.Y.C.
Page 38: Matt Tyrnauer styled by Beth Blake; shirt and suit by Paul Stuart, from Paul Stuart, N.Y.C.; tie by Prada, from Prada, N.Y.C.
Page 57: Tracee Ellis Ross styled by Daniel Caudill for Visages Style; dress by John Galliano, from Barneys New York, Beverly Hills
Page 74: Kithe Brewster for Visages Style.
Page 93: Gretchen Mol's Dolce & Gabbana dress, corset, and shoes from the Dolce & Gabbana boutique, N.Y.C.; Tom Binns necklace from Saks Fifth Avenue, N.Y.C.
Page 98: Martin McDonagh styled by David Thomas; shirt by Prada, suit by Nigel Curtiss, both from Browns, London
Page 100: Anna Piaggi's coat, hat, and feathers by Chanel; ropewalker costume from the Orfei Circus; cut gloves by Karl Lagerfeld; stocking glove by Ann de Meulemeester; apron and belt worn as necklace by Miu Miu; shoe and boot by Manolo Blahnik; bag by Christian Lacroix; earrings by Correani; cane by Madeleine Gély
Pages 108–9: Claire Danes's Jill Stuart dress from Scoop, N.Y.C.
Pages 110–11: Anna Sui dress from Anna Sui, N.Y.C.
Page 113: Jill Stuart dress from Scoop, N.Y.C.; Philosophy di Alberta Ferretti hat from Intermix, N.Y.C.
Page 115: Julie Taymor's Gap shirt and pants from Gap stores nationwide
Pages 122–23: Tipper Gore's turtleneck by Donna Karan, from Saks Fifth Avenue stores nationwide; cardigan by Burberrys, from Burberrys stores nationwide.

Beauty and Grooming

Cover: Claire Danes's hair styled with Matrix Vital Nutrients BodyFusion Volumizer. All makeup from Christian Dior. On her eyes, eyeshadow in Antique Rose and Desert Lights; on her lips, lipstick in Rose Butterfly. Didier Malige for Frédéric Fekkai Beauté.
Page 32: Bottom, see credits for cover.
Page 36: Ingrid Sischy's makeup by Assumpta Clohessy for Price, Inc.
Page 38: Matt Tyrnauer's grooming by Manuella for Trilise
Page 46: Jo Monger for Pix Producers.
Page 56: Duncan Sheik's grooming by Mike Karg for Wella USA
Page 57: Tracee Ellis Ross's hair by Johnny Walker, makeup by Garrett Gearvis, both for Visages Style
Page 66: Tatiana von Fürstenberg's and **Francesca Gregorini's** hair by Johnny Walker, makeup by Garrett Gearvis, both for Visages Style.
Page 67: Doug Liman's grooming by Mike Karg for Wella USA
Page 74: Hair by David Gardner for Visages Style, grooming by Bethany Karyn for Frédéric McEvoy at Heller Artists
Page 93: Gretchen Mol's hair styled with Aveda Phomollient. All makeup from Clinique. On her eyes, Quick Eyes in Willow and Stay the Day Eyeshadow in Lemongrass; on her lips, Superlast Cream Lipstick in Velvet Pouch. Laurent Philippon for Atlantis; Pati Dubroff for DWNY.
Page 98: Martin McDonagh's grooming by Paul Percival for Streeters.
Page 100: Anna Piaggi's hair by Roberto Pagnini for Freelancer; makeup by Nando Chiesa for Spazio Libero
Pages 106–13: See credits for cover.
Page 115: Yannick d'Is for Atlantis; James Kaliardos for the Agency
Pages 116–17: Al Gore's grooming by Christi Brown. **Tipper Gore's** hair by Garland Nicholas, makeup by Camelia Mehrkar, both for Norbert Hair Designers.
Pages 144–45: Bahram for Oscar Blandi Plaza NY–Kiehl's.

Photographs and Miscellany

Page 16: Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery/Smithsonian Institution.
Page 20: From Camera 5.
Page 46: Casting by Lynda Goldstein for Pix Producers.
Page 57: Bottom left, from Woodfin Camp.
Page 58: From top, by Ira Wyman/Sygma, Jack Spratt/New York Times Co./Archive, Allan Tannenbaum/ Sygma, John Forasté/Brown University.
Page 70: By J. G. Edmanson/International Stock (Sardinia), Richard Ellis/Sygma (McCain), Gary Gershoff/Retna (Hootie), from Globe Photos (Freud), by David Kelley (Comme des Garçons, Cristal, matches, McClellands, Rolling Rock, Tocca), James M. Kelly/Globe Photos (Greenspan), from the Neal Peters Collection (*Love Story, Risky Business*), by Terry O'Neill/Sygma (Fayed), Lisa Rose/Globe Photos (Dershowitz), Hy Simon/Globe Photos (Capote), Stewart/Globe Photos (Simone), from the Telegraph Colour Library/FPG International (Prague).
Page 90: Inset from the Bridgeman Art Library
Page 96: Second from top, from C.P.I
Page 98: Bottom, second from left, by Scott Frances; second from right, by Gérard Schachmes/Regards
Pages 106–13: Props styled by Helen Crowther.
Page 119: Top and second from top, from U.P.I./Corbis-Bettmann; second from bottom, from Saba; bottom, from *The Tennessean*
Pages 132–35: All courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery/Smithsonian Institution.
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Pages 146–47: Left, from Globe Photos; inset from Hank Kaplan.
Pages 150–51: From Archive Photos
Page 152: Bottom, from U.P.I./Corbis-Bettmann
Page 153: From *Sports Illustrated*/Time Inc.
Page 154: From U.P.I./Corbis-Bettmann
Page 155: Center, from Jim Schwenke Jr.; all others from U.P.I./Corbis-Bettmann.

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Vanity Fair № 450 (ISSN 0733-8899). The magazine is published monthly by The Conde Nast Publications Inc., Condé Nast Building, 350 Madison Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10017. Steven T. Florio, President and Chief Executive Officer; David B. Chemidlin, Treasurer; Jill Henderson, Secretary. Periodicals postage paid at N.Y., N.Y. 10001, and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as International Publications Mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash. Sales Agreement No. 33332. Subscriptions: In the United States and its possessions, $18 for one year, $34 for two years. In Canada, $32 for one year, including GST and HST where applicable. Registration No. 123242885. Elsewhere, $37, payable in advance. Single copies: $3.50 in the United States, $4.00 in Canada. For subscriptions, address changes, and adjustments, write to *Vanity Fair,* Box 53516, Boulder, Colo. 80328-3516. The first copy of a new subscription will be mailed within eight weeks of receipt of order. Eight weeks is required for change of address; please give both new address and old as printed on last label. Address all editorial, production, and business correspondence to *Vanity Fair,* 350 Madison Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10017
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Planetarium

Michael Lutin tells Aquarians that freedom is in sight

AQUARIUS JAN. 20–FEB. 18

There's only one word for you now: hyper. What in the world did they slip into your oatmeal? The Mars-Jupiter conjunction in your sign is putting you right into orbit. It's nice to see you up and around, but it must be a little intimidating for those who are on the receiving end of your confrontations and flagrant disregard for authority. Is this pent-up rage, being vented at last? Or should the medics come and check for diet pills? Maybe it's just the healthy exhilaration of believing that sometime soon you might actually enjoy freedom.

PISCES FEB. 19–MARCH 20

If you're highly evolved, all the behind-the-scenes activity associated with Mars that is going on in your 12th house will not freak you out. For if you're on the proper path, you know you need to be out of the limelight now, because you're passing through a period devoted to preparation and inner work—most of it unsung and, for the time being, unappreciated. No big deal. If, however, you are a lower type, then you are probably thinking you can rely on luck to save you from all your machinations and monkey business. The strange truth? It just may.

ARIES MARCH 21–APRIL 19

You're probably a little schizzy now. While Mars is traveling with Jupiter, you could be zipping madly around as if you'd just chugged five cups of espresso. The optimism you're exhibiting *has* to be caffeine-induced. What else could account for your wildly hopeful attitude? With Saturn still in Aries, you're not *really* all that high-spirited. Your mind is moving 10 times faster than your life, but you realize you have a long row to hoe. All the fast talk in the world isn't going to make the job go any faster. Knowing you, you'll try anyway.

TAURUS APRIL 20–MAY 20

Many Tauruses, when they're alone, are in turmoil now, fearing that disaster is in hot pursuit of them and that, no matter what they do, forces behind their backs (in the form of secret enemies) are working against their success. Is this ridiculous? It certainly seems absurd at this time, with Mars and Jupiter in your midheaven and your career buzzing like a hive of bees. Besides, who would ever want to see you fail? It all comes down to a question of faith when there seems to be no obvious need for it. But if you believe in luck, you should have it.

GEMINI MAY 21–JUNE 21

It's got to bug those dearest to you that at times you reveal your neediness and wish to be held and comforted, but then you do an about-face and act like a total stranger. If they can just stick around, those loved ones will soon respect where you're at, with Pluto in your solar 7th house and Saturn in your 11th. Although you are working at letting go, the wicked old anxieties die hard. Your resistance notwithstanding, maybe you are getting closer to being willing to exchange the brick wall for a room with a view.

CANCER JUNE 22–JULY 22

Your achievements to date have been formidable. Your manipulation of finance alone is awesome, and you've begun to make a name for yourself, despite harsh criticism from a generally unforgiving world. The trick now is to guard the public persona you have given blood, sweat, and tears to attain, and yet to live more openly than you ever have in your life. And sexually? Don't ask. Unless you're the Dalai Lama, if you're not already carrying on shamelessly, you're definitely considering doing the sorts of things they do in Swedish films.

LEO JULY 23–AUG. 22

Leos are usually considered self-starters and self-motivators, and under normal circumstances that's true. At this time, though, with an opposition from Mars, you need a kick in the pants from someone who offers you a chance to get out of a terrible rut. If you're of dating age, which in the case of some Leos means *always,* find someone for Saturday night. Alone or hitched, and as resistant as you are to surrendering your independence, right now you need to be tied up and bossed around. Actually, you might find that rather exciting.

VIRGO AUG. 23–SEPT. 22

The good news is that your work life is fuller and more exciting than it has been in years. Isn't that the point of Virgo existence, after all, not only to be busy and useful but also to be doing something you enjoy? At least that's what some astrologers will try to make you believe. According to them, you're supposed to forget that in recent months you, along with your Virgo sisters and brothers, have been love-starved and obliged to give out much more compassion, support, and affection than you have received. Sure. Just forget about that.

LIBRA SEPT. 23–OCT. 23

You need excitement and you need it now. That's usually how planets in the 5th house make you feel. If you're single, *everybody* will seem like Mr. or Ms. Right in the beginning. If you're married, even happily, you may be unable to bear the situation one second longer or you may be ready to scream from boredom. If the shoe fits, please don't use astrology as a cop-out and say your astrologer told you to cut loose and have an affair. That would be a cheap way to rationalize your own hostile need to act out against someone you once thought very attractive.

SCORPIO OCT. 24–NOV. 21

You're upside down, inside out, and churning more feverishly these days than clothes in a washing machine. On top of that, you've probably got people camped out all over your house, and your whole routine is upset. How could it *not* be so, with strong planetary vibrations causing renovations, disruptions, and changes in your 4th house, that of home and family? Through it all, you're still working and running around and fighting for your piece of the action. When it comes to the ability to function, bless your soul, you've got more determination than a cockroach.

SAGITTARIUS NOV. 22–DEC. 21

It's not that you're cheap, because you've been known to throw money down the drain in all kinds of frivolous ways. It's just that you have periodic bouts of sanity when you attempt to be more stable, to pull back and act strong and economize your little heart out. Thank God those moments of thrift are mere lapses in your adventurous life and are short-lived. Especially now, with your ruling planet conjunct Mars and you being *so-o-o* impatient and restless. How could you even *think* of taking a bus anywhere when a jet is so much faster?

CAPRICORN DEC. 22–JAN. 19

While some Capricorns have become oddly spiritual lately, others have been immobilized by a paralysis that should finally begin to go away as Neptune slowly moves out of your solar 1st house. With Saturn deep in your 4th house, you're certainly still embroiled with family members and weaseling your way into a more secure situation, while claiming to be attempting to separate from everyone. On the money front, with Mars in your 2nd house you're spending like crazy in the belief that God will provide. We'll just see about *that.*

To hear Michael Lutin read your weekly horoscope, call 1-900-28V-FAIR on a Touch-Tone phone. Cost: $1.95 per minute. If you are under 18, you need parental permission.

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Proust Questionnaire

Tracey Ullman



With her astonishing range of characters—from Linda Granger, a collagen'd Hollywood has-been, to Fern Rosenthal, a tacky Boca Raton retiree—Tracey Ullman has become comedy's mistress of disguise. This month, as she publishes a companion volume to her brilliant hit HBO show, *Tracey Takes On . . .*, Ullman reveals a bit of the person underneath the padding, [illegible] and makeup

What is your idea of perfect happiness?
Being with my family, in the countryside, safe, happy, and healthy.

What is your greatest fear?
To name one would be giving it power. I'm not that scared of anything.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?
Patience. An L.A. lawyer, agent, business-affairs person will not call you back unless you pester the bastard!

On what occasion do you lie?
When people ask if I care that my nose gets bigger every year.

What do you dislike most about your appearance?
Just mentioned it—my conk!

Which living person do you most despise?
The person who stole my faux-leopard Gaultier jacket when we moved house in 1988.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?
Fuck—it's the greatest word. When are we going to lighten up on it? It emphasizes things beautifully.

What is your greatest regret?
Not reading the fine print in my contract regarding *The Simpsons.*

Which talent would you most like to have?
To sing and look as cool as Chrissie Hynde.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
Ignoring the British class system and becoming nouveau riche.

If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?
Me again, with a smaller nose.

What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?
Being on location in prosthetic makeup and body padding for 14 hours, in 110 degrees, while my husband is off playing golf.

Where would you like to live?
In the French countryside. No one would talk to me, because the French hate chirpy London girls with a sense of humor. Heaven!

What is your most marked characteristic?
I won't attempt another nose gag.

Who are your heroes in real life?
Buddhists. They can smile at funerals.

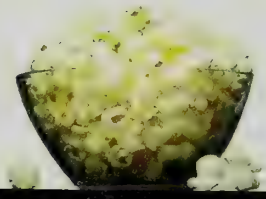
What are your favorite names?
How about names I hate, like Piers, Camilla, Octavia, Tarquin, and Jon without the *h?*

What is it that you most dislike?
The British class system, discrimination, tabloid journalism, and comedy shows that aren't funny.

How would you like to die?
When I'm 95, with my own hips, on a Sunday afternoon, snoozing in an armchair listening to Elvis Costello.

What is your motto?
Funny is money.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM WRIGHT



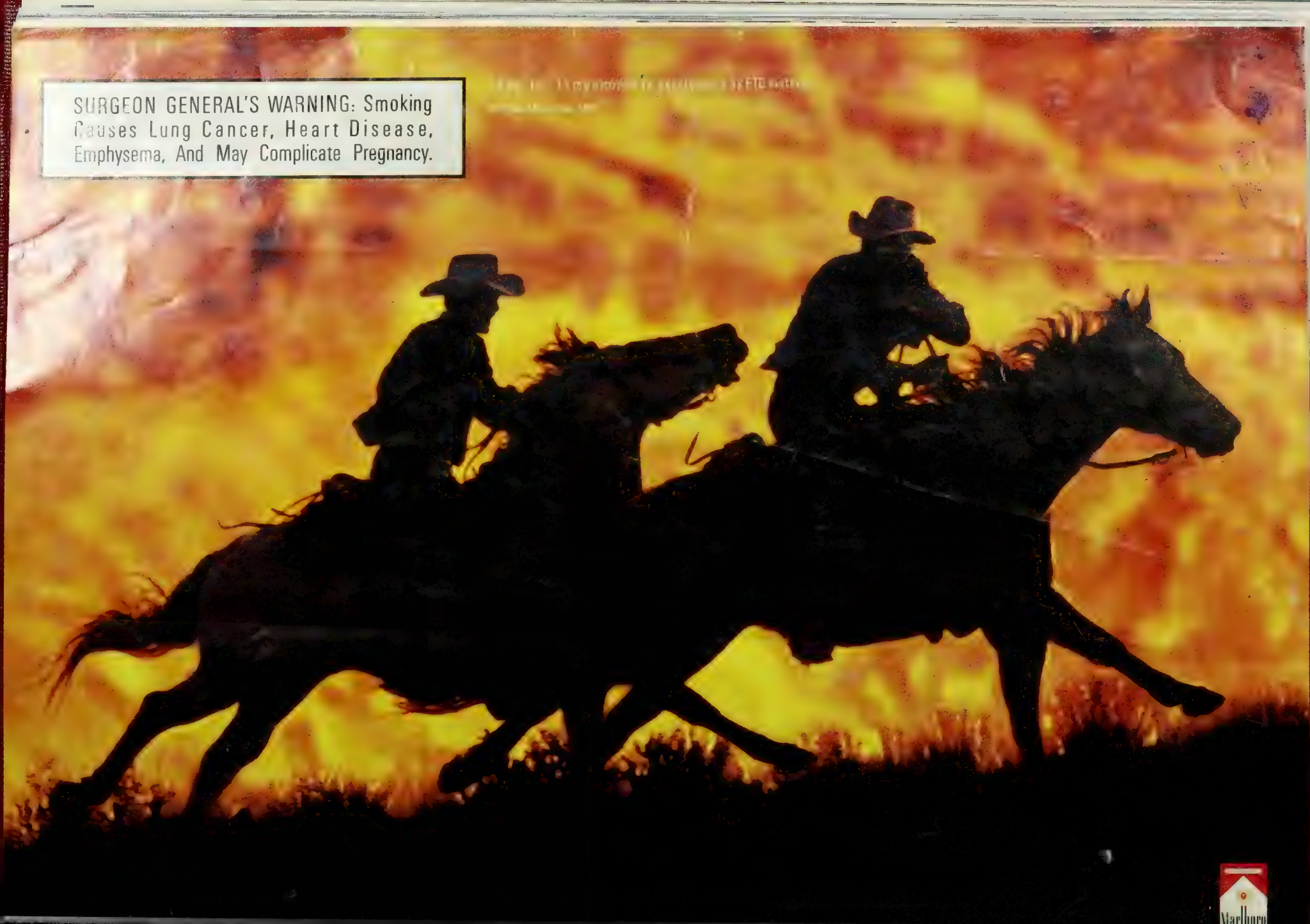
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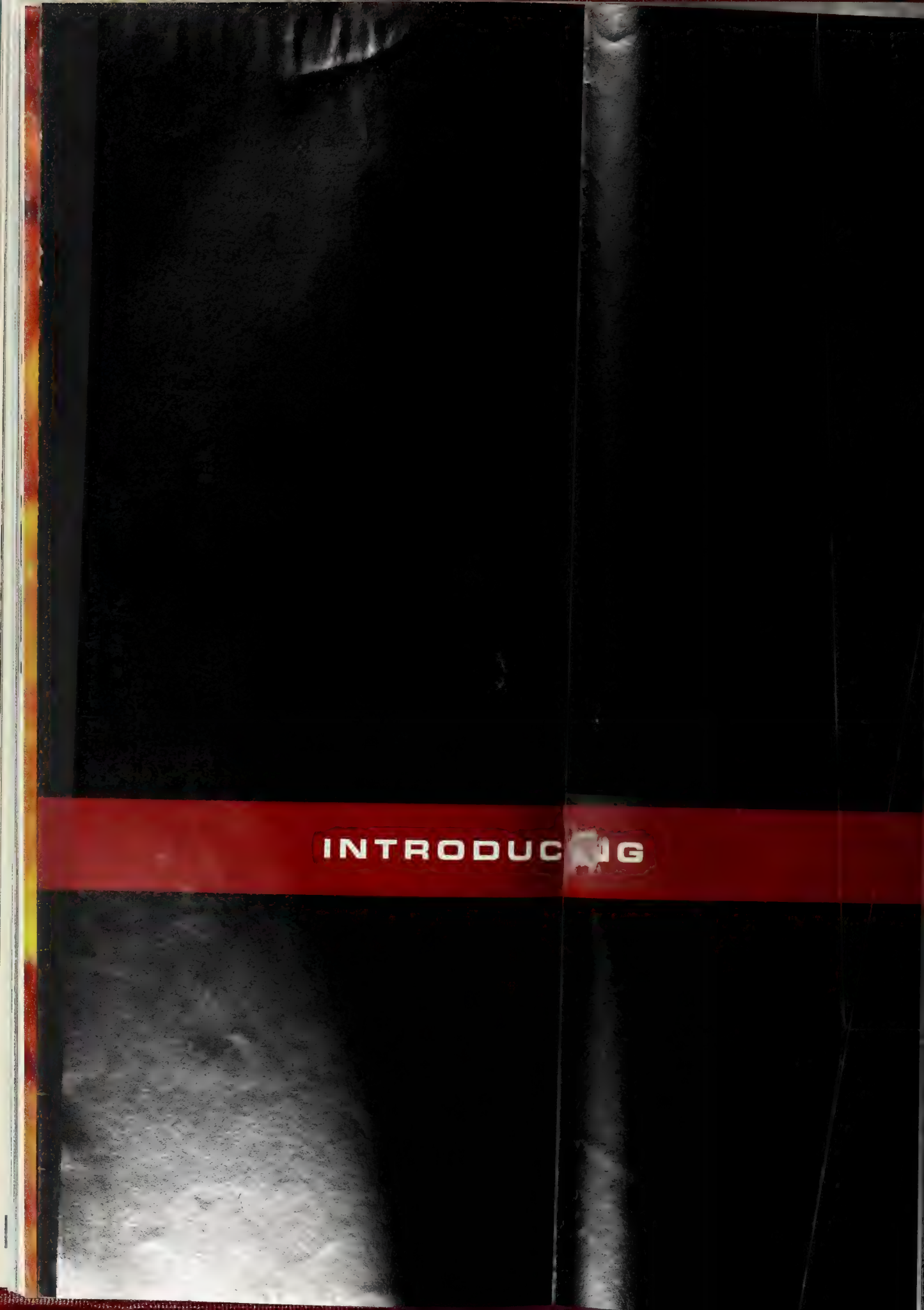
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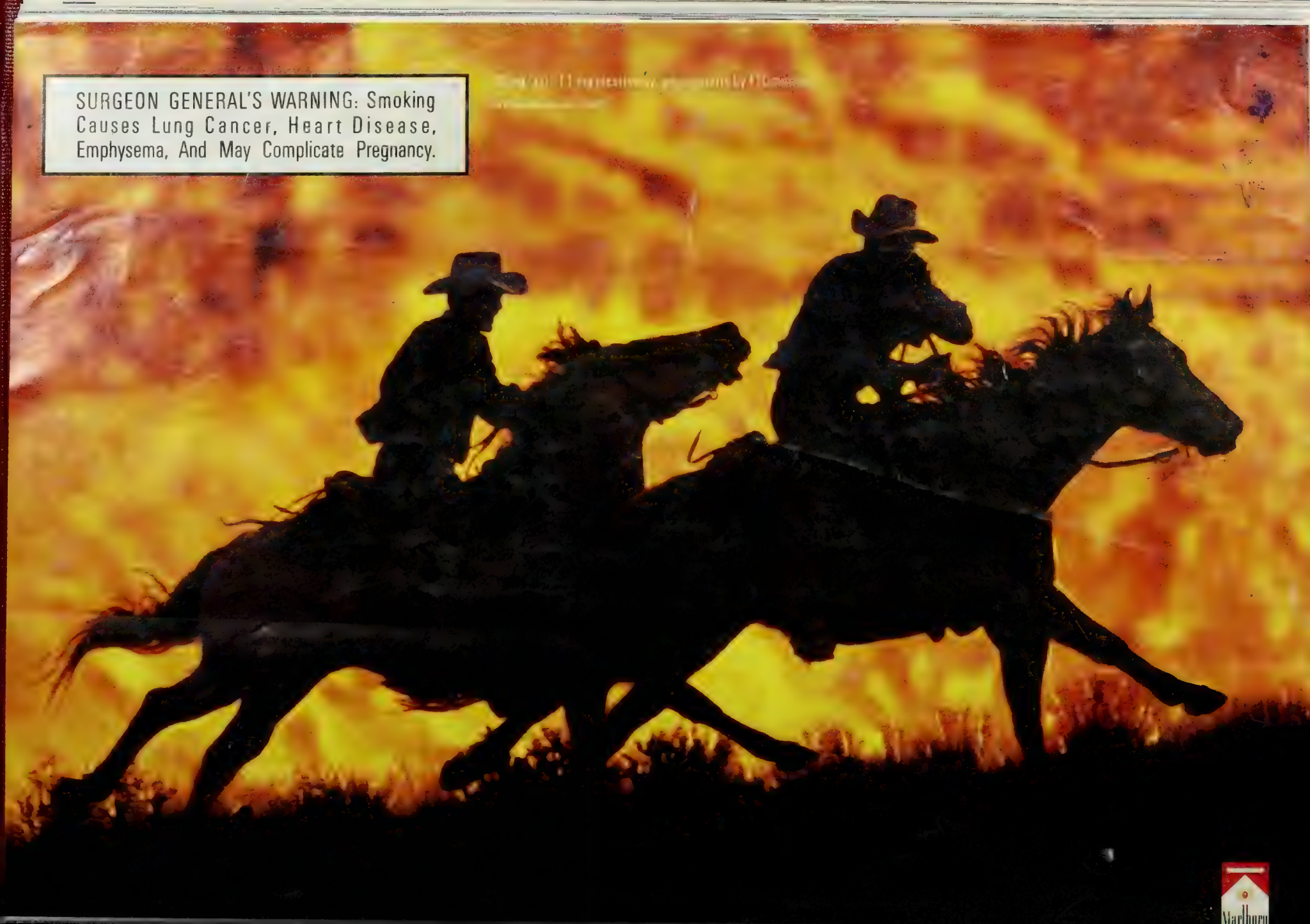
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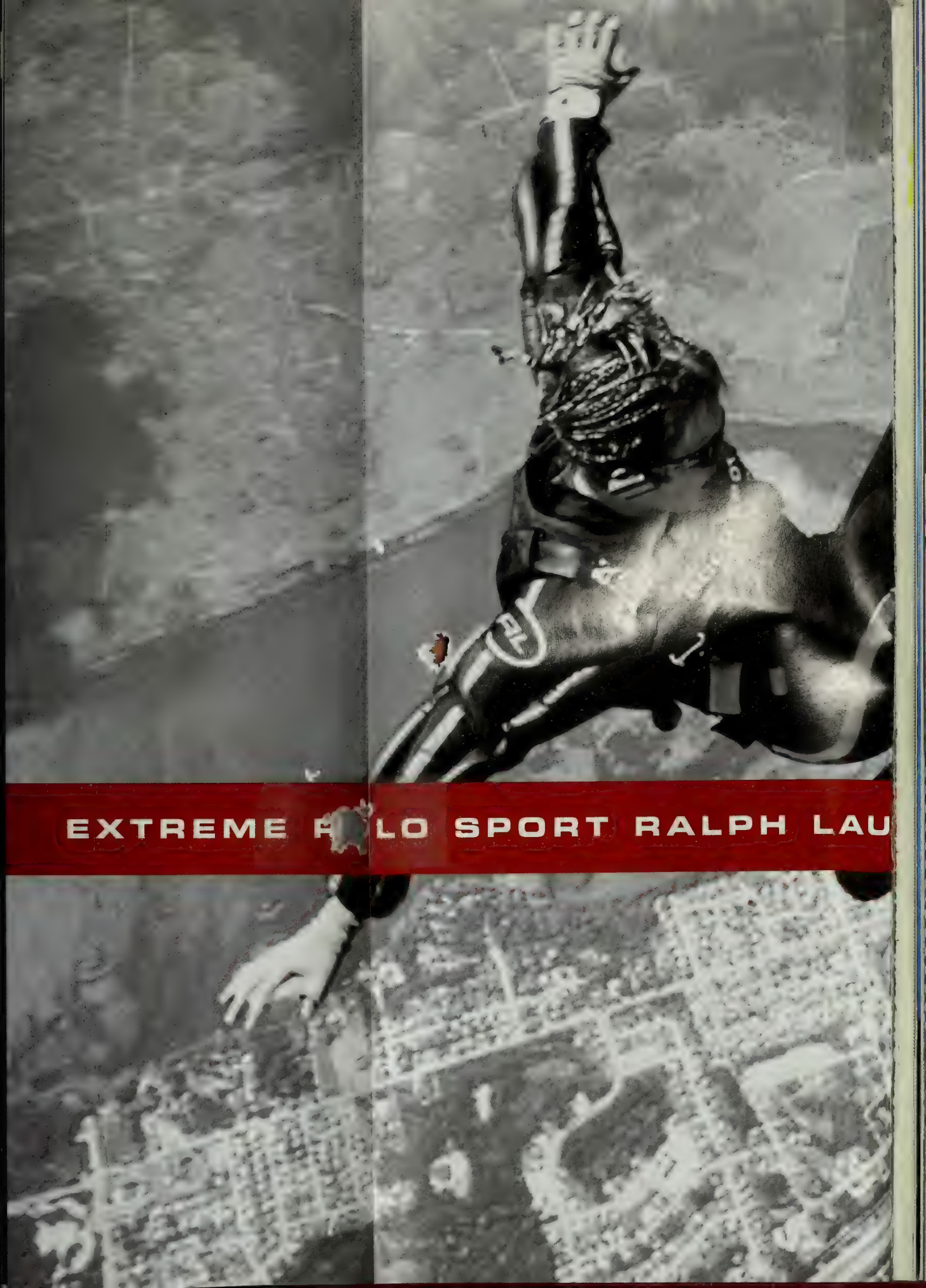
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MY FINE COLLINS ON EDITH HEAD
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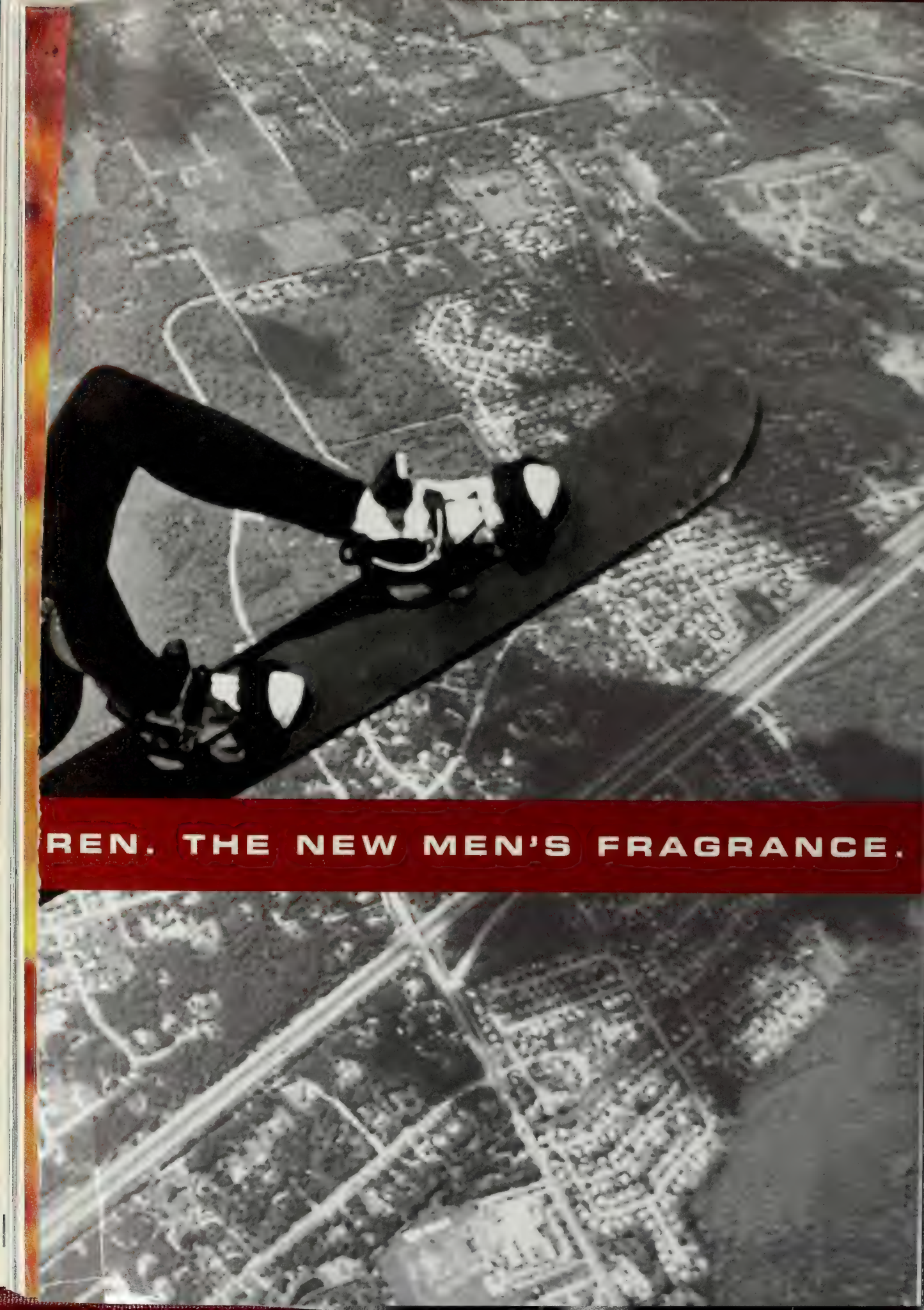
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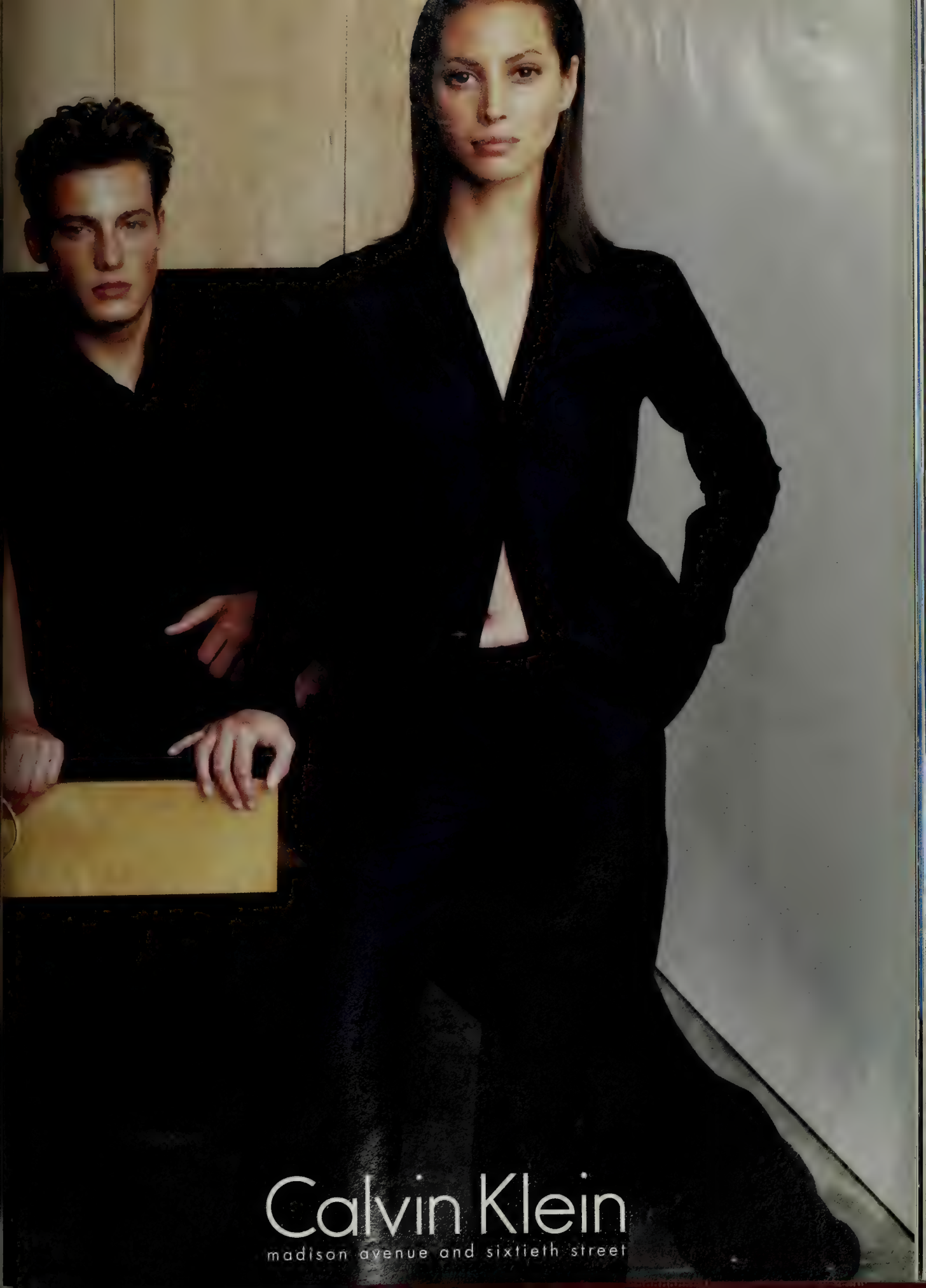

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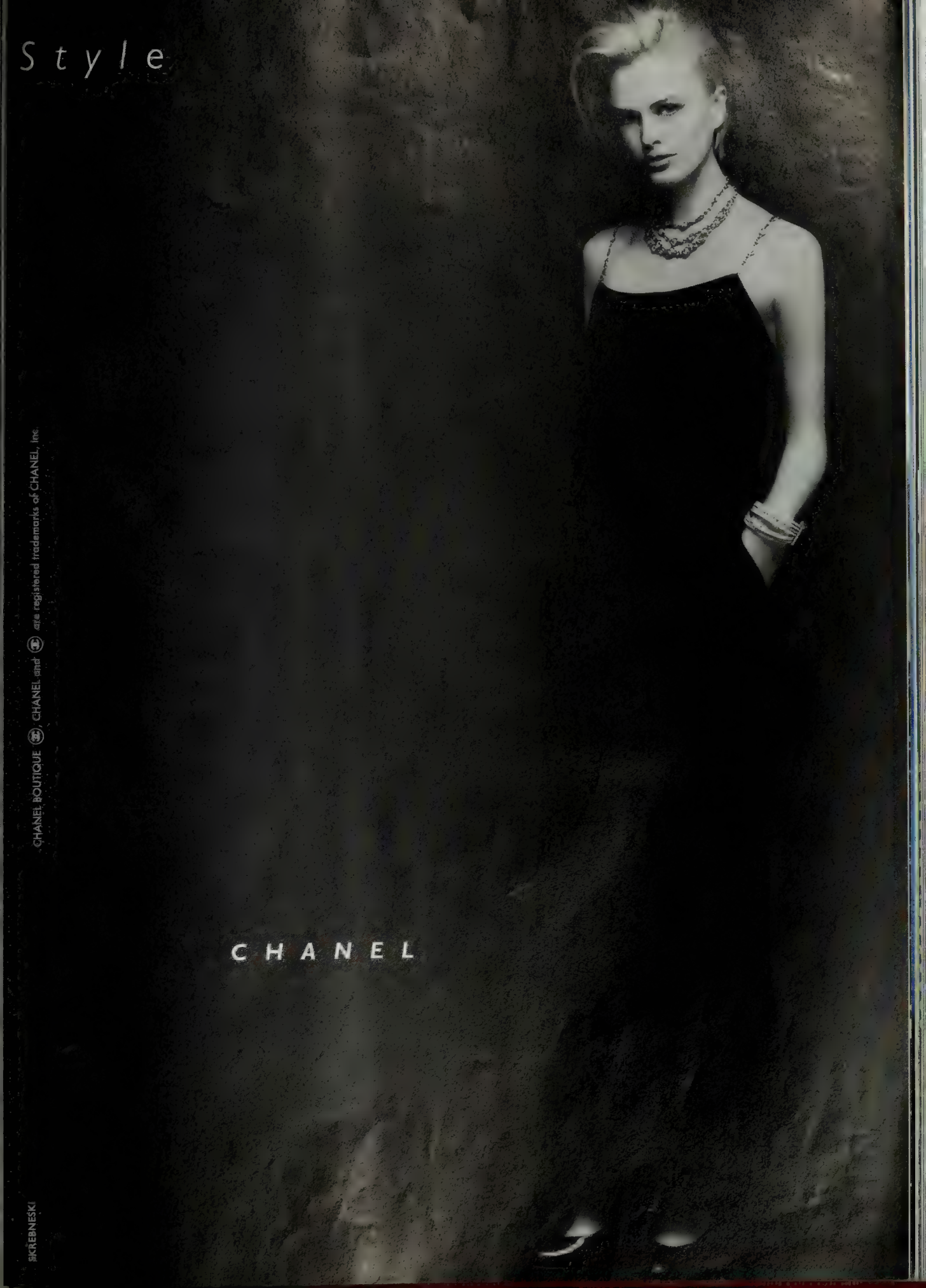
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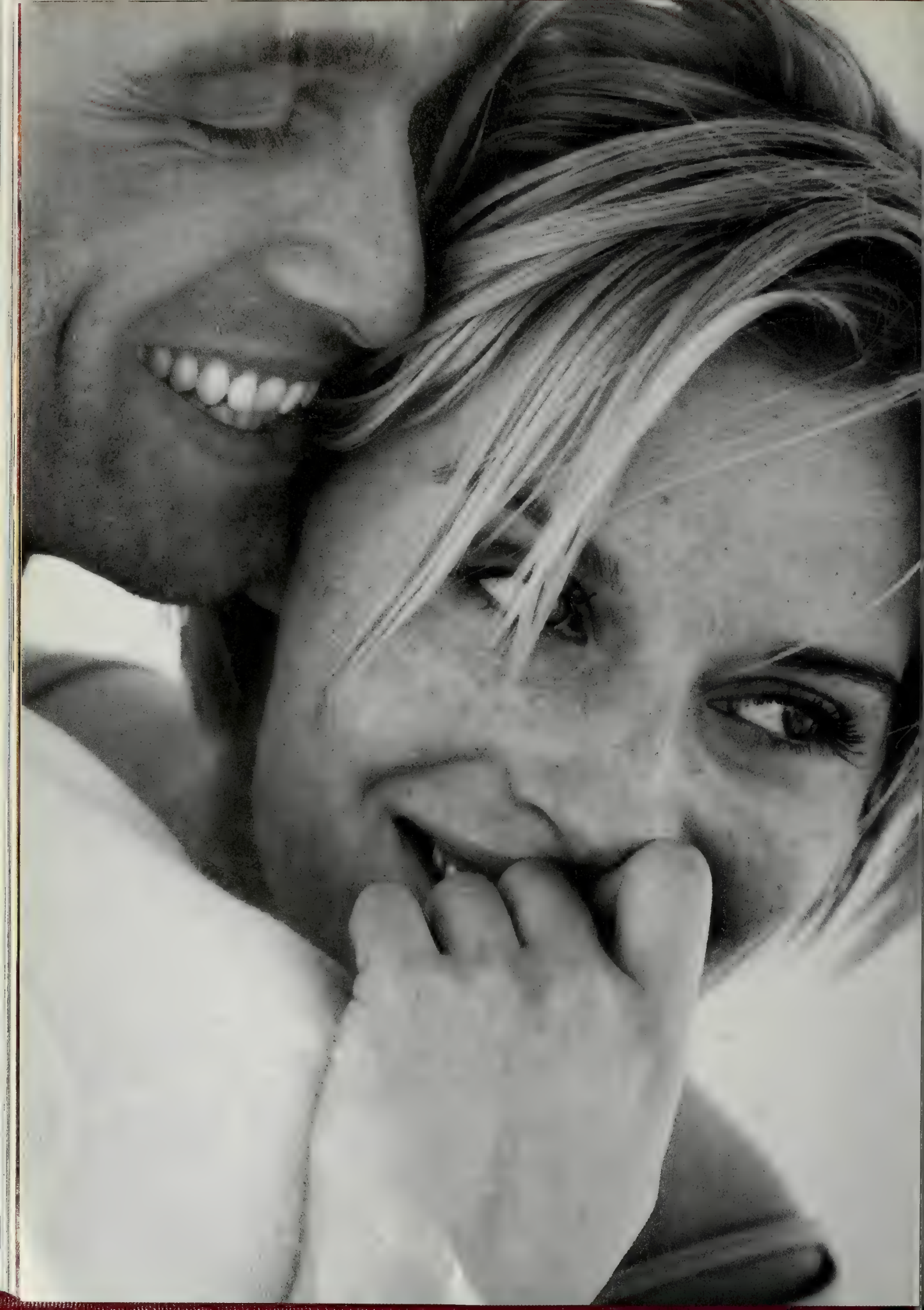
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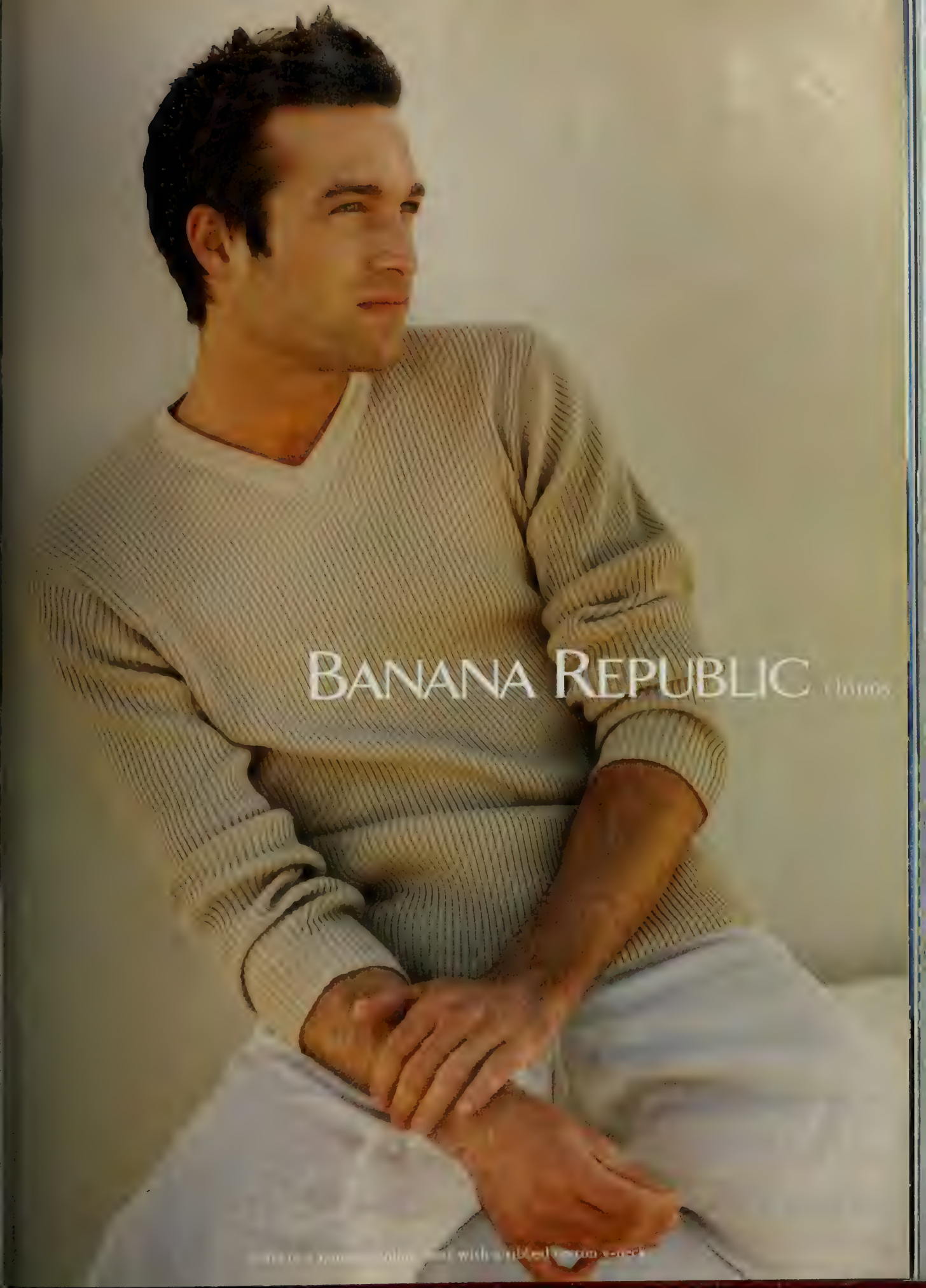
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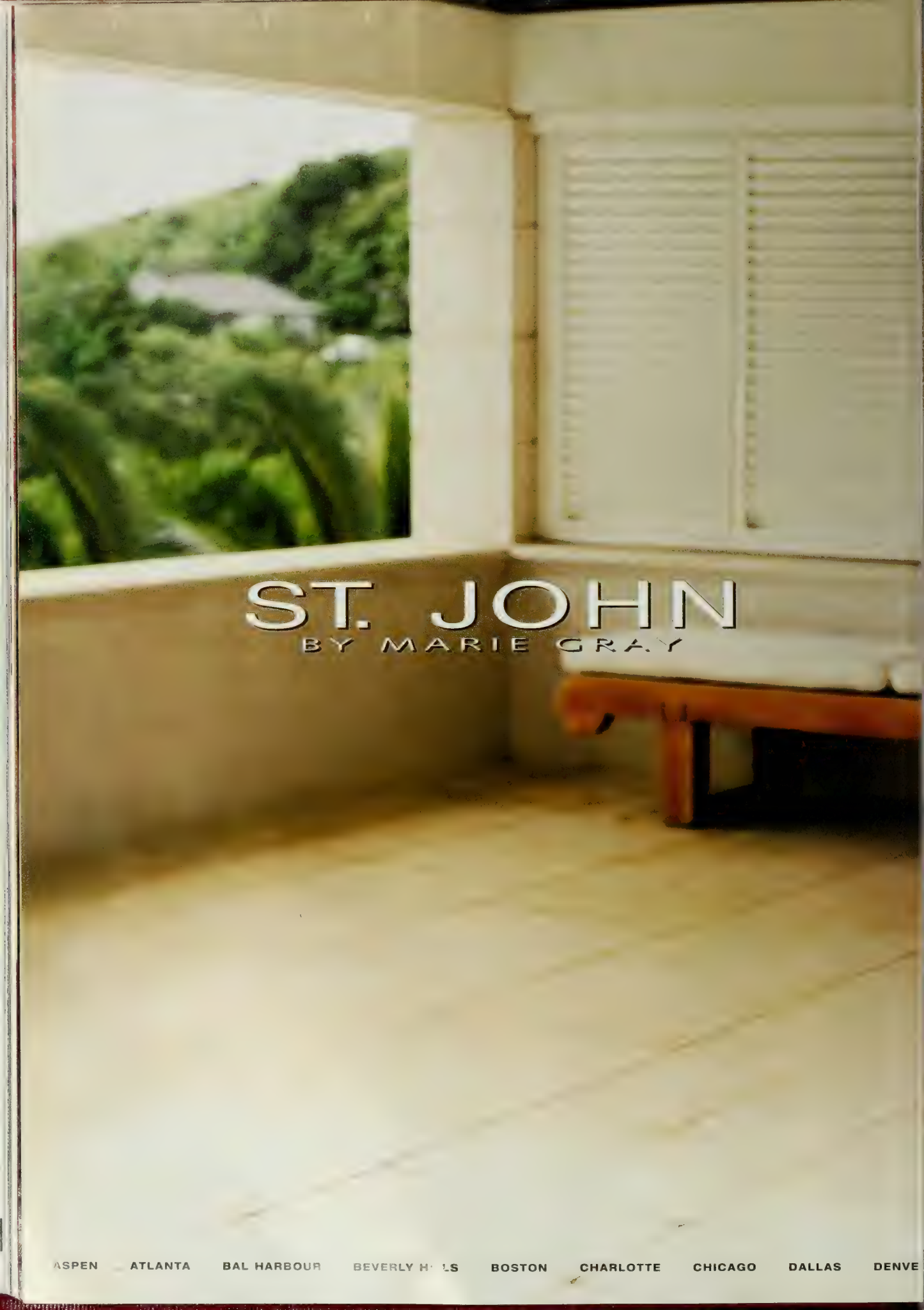


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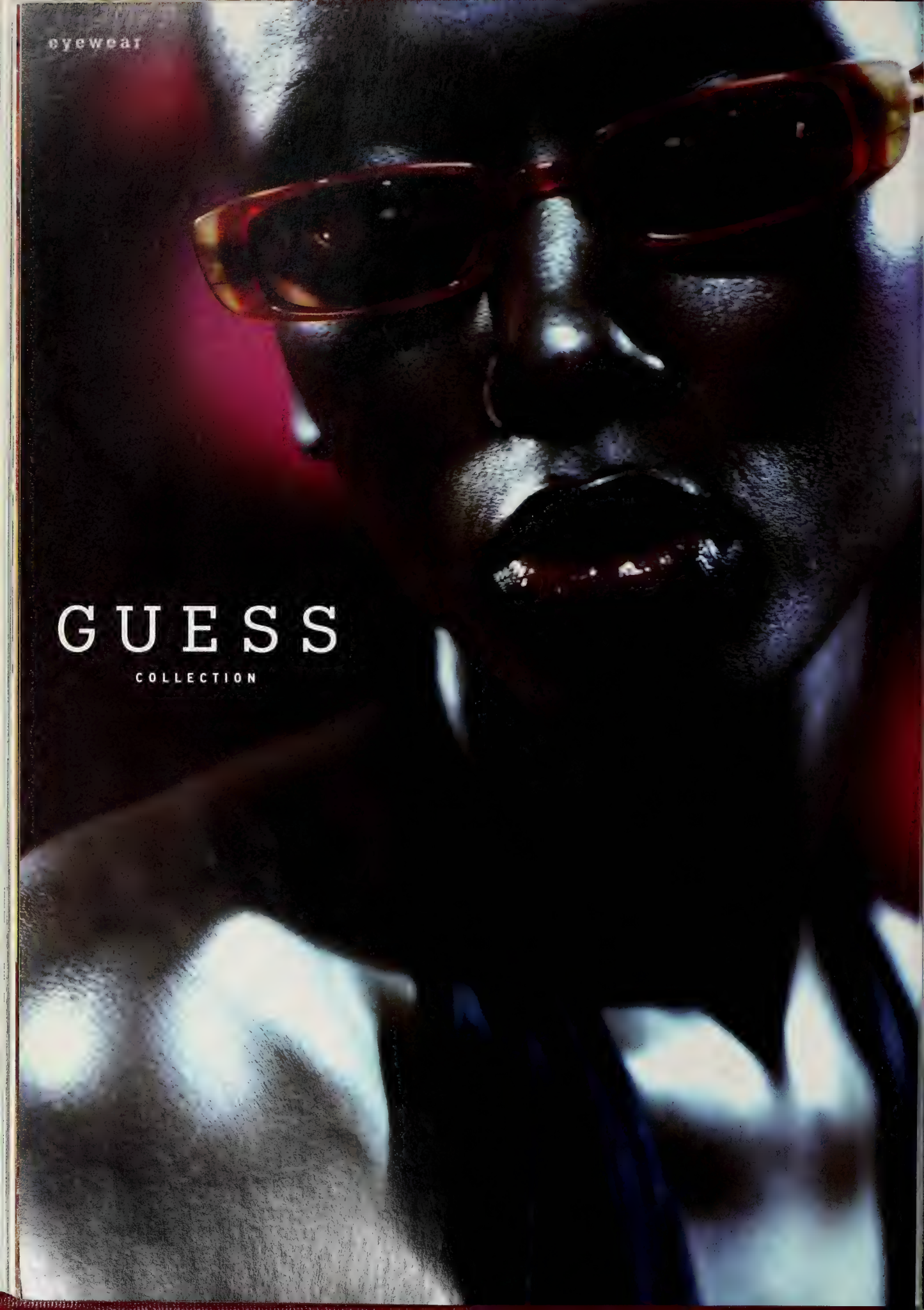
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Features

MADONNA AND CHILD | 204

After morphing through 15 years of pop-cultural images, Madonna has become a legend of self-reinvention. Now, Ingrid Sischy discovers, with a 16-month-old daughter, a new album, and an unabashed desire for love, Madonna is grappling with the one identity she's never truly exposed—her own. Photographs by Mario Testino.

STEALING BEAUTY | 214

The costliest art theft in U.S. history remains unsolved. In an exclusive story, Tom Mashberg tells how he found himself as a go-between for a petty thief, a master criminal, the F.B.I., and Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum as it tried to recover $200 million worth of works by Vermeer, Rembrandt, and others looted in 1990.

STATE OF GRACE | 220

Alexis Jetter enters the tucked-away world of premier storyteller Grace Paley, whose latest book, *Just as I Thought,* reflects a merry life on the barricades. Photographs by Annie Leibovitz.

LIONS IN WINTER | 222

With the Winter Olympics approaching, Timothy Greenfield-Sanders captures the N.H.L.'s fastest and fiercest as they head to Nagano, and Mordecai Richler gives a fan's notes.

ANYTHING FOR OSCAR | 230

For almost 30 years, as queen of Paramount's wardrobe department, Edith Head dressed everyone from Elizabeth Taylor to Grace Kelly. As Amy Fine Collins finds, Head's success was fueled by a talent for manipulation and for taking credit whenever possible.

BITTER SPOILS | 238

The divorce of art-dealing scion Alec Wildenstein made headlines, but with new accusations that the $5 billion dynasty is tainted by deception and Nazi collaboration, the trouble has just begun. Suzanna Andrews mines the hidden history of art's richest family, and George Rush gets the he-said, she-said of Alec's split from Jocelyne. Portraits by Jonathan Becker.

Columns

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Watching a city literally rot away, Christopher Hitchens wonders when Washington, D.C., voters will finally return the insults of their fabulously corrupt mayor. Photograph by Harry Benson.

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As the Museum of the City of New York exhibits Berenice Abbott's photographs of a freshly industrialized metropolis, A. M. Homes remembers a visual pioneer.

CALL OF THE WILDENSTEIN | 238

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THE BOOK OF DAVID | 132

The Children, Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist David Halberstam's new book, is a return to his first, perhaps greatest story. David Margolick finds that Halberstam's subjects, the young heroes of the civil-rights movement, claim him as their own. Portrait by Gasper Tringale.

THE FORD THAT DRIVES GUCCI | 136

Tom Ford turned Gucci from a moribund leather company into the billion-dollar envy of the fashion industry, becoming a style icon along the way. Michael Shnayerson checks out Ford's new designs for Gucci's future and his own. Photograph by Herb Ritts.

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To Virginia's horse set, the romance between timid, gun-loving heiress Susan Cummings and penniless Argentinean polo player Roberto Villegas was a curiosity. More curious still, reports Judy Bachrach, are the events that led to his death by a Walther semi-automatic last September.

HALL OF FAME | 172

Ralph Lauren nominates *Harper's Bazaar* editor Liz Tilberis, whose memoir, *No Time to Die,* chronicles a battle fought with grace and courage. Portrait by Patrick Demarchelier.

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As partner at Patton Boggs, representing such giants as G.E., Sony, and MCI, lobbyist Tommy Boggs may be the most powerful unelected man in Washington. Inside the Beltway, Carl Bernstein profiles the living axis of money and politics. Portrait by Jonathan Becker.

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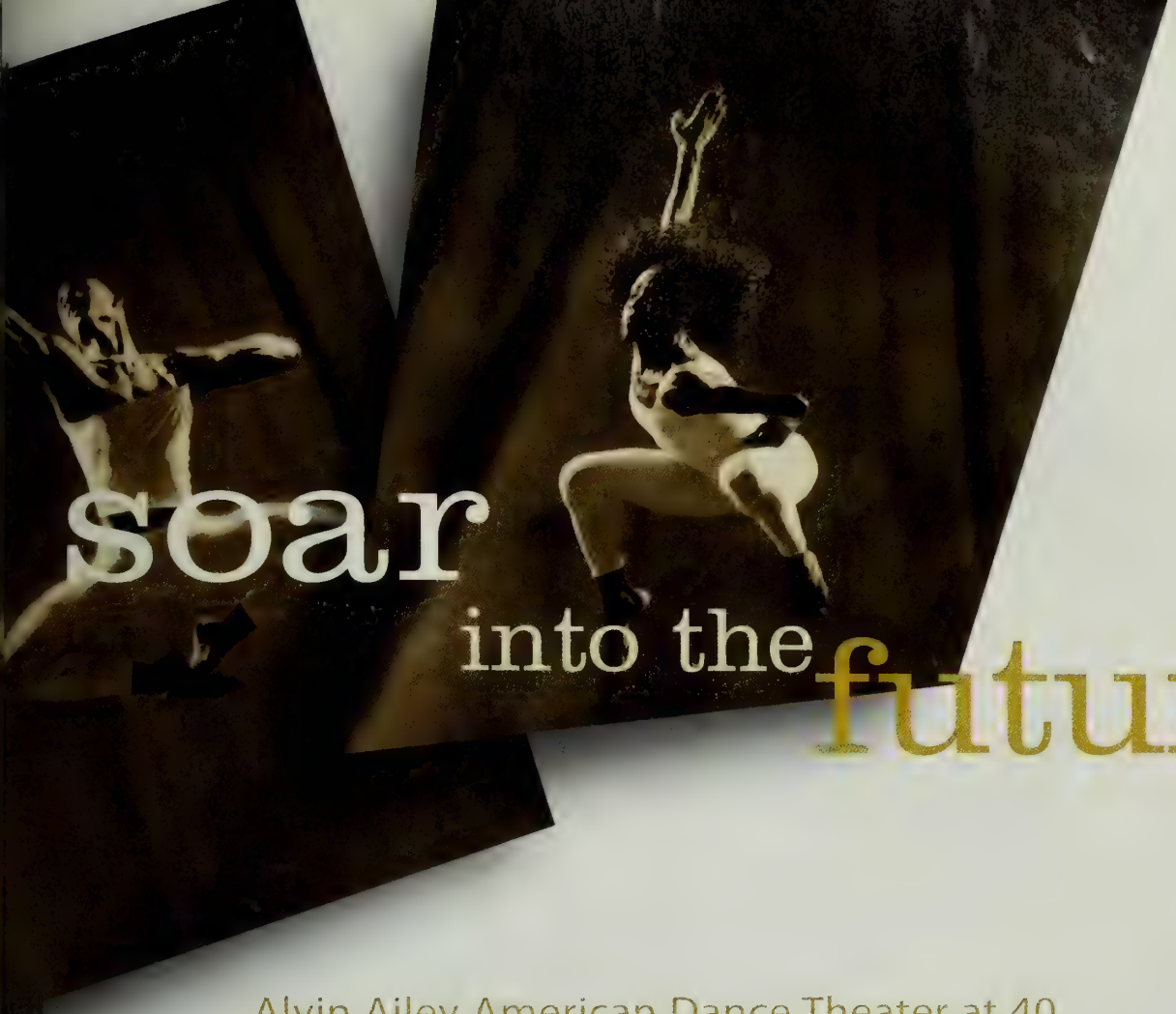
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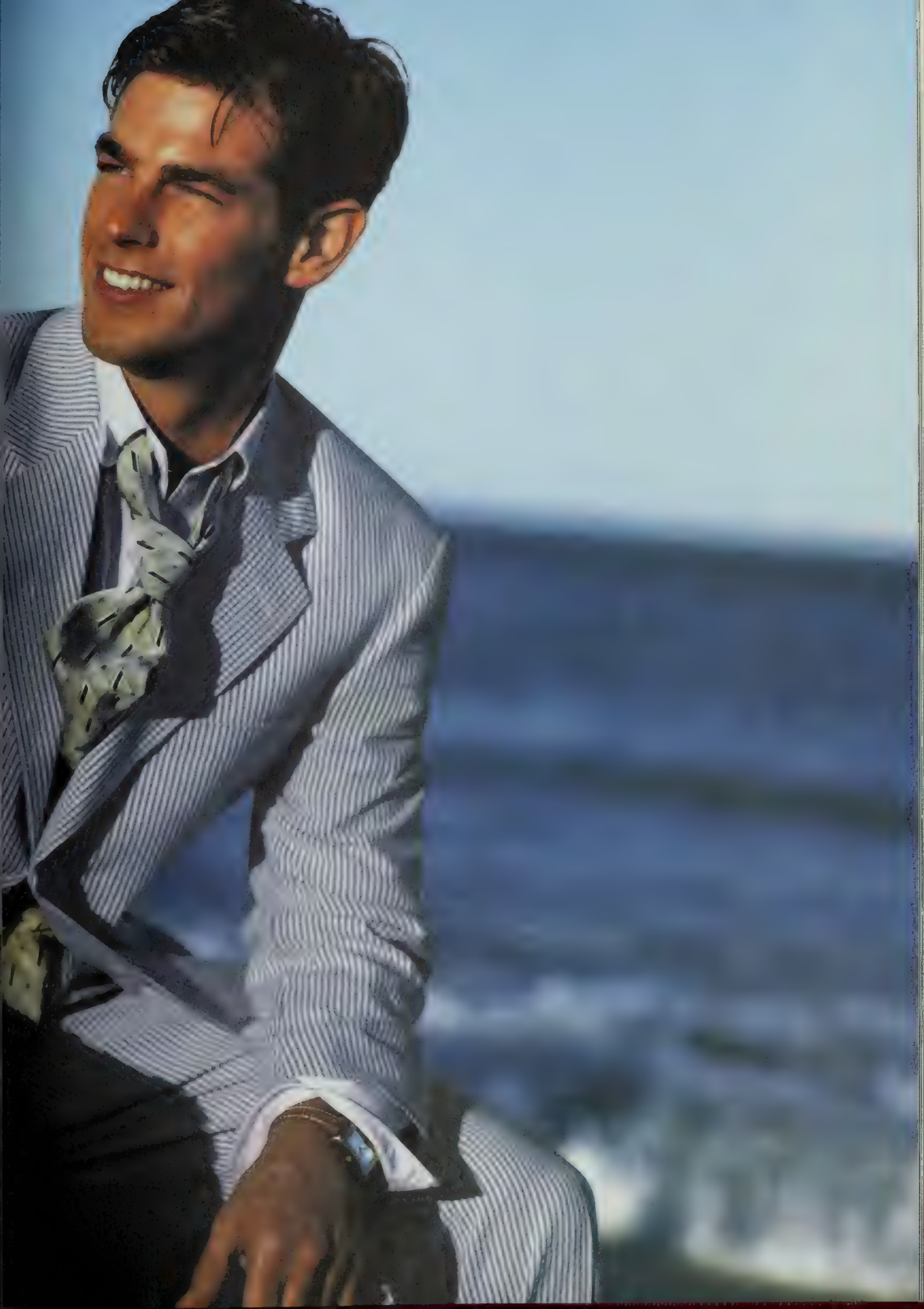














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During the month of February, **Showtime** salutes Black History Month with a spectacular line up of Showtime Original Pictures and Theatricals.

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Mandela and de Klerk, a Showtime Original Picture depicting the lives of Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk, the two men who changed the future of South Africa, starring Sidney Poitier and Michael Caine.

2/16 at 10:00 pm
When We Were Kings, winner for Best Documentary Feature at the 1996 Academy Awards, features the famed "Rumble in the Jungle": the history-making 1974 bout between George Foreman and Muhammad Ali held in Zaire and broadcast around the world.

Reel Men on A&E

He rode into town, and nothing was ever the same. Find out how a boy named Marion became the screen's legendary tough guy. John Wayne kicks off a week of Hollywood heroes on Reel Men on Biography.® Join A&E for the **Biography of John Wayne, Cary Grant, Gary Cooper, Kirk Douglas, and Jimmy Stewart**. Reel Men Week begins with a 2-hour biography® special: John Wayne on Sunday, March 15 at 8pm ET/9pm PT.

PBS: Washington Week in Review

Every Friday, moderator Ken Bode and top reporters gather for the weekend's first look at the week's news. Broadcast live, **Washington Week in Review** stretches outside Washington, D.C., into local communities and international hot spots that are changing the social and political landscapes. From WETA/ Washington, D.C., Fridays at 8 pm on PBS stations.

Drink of the Month

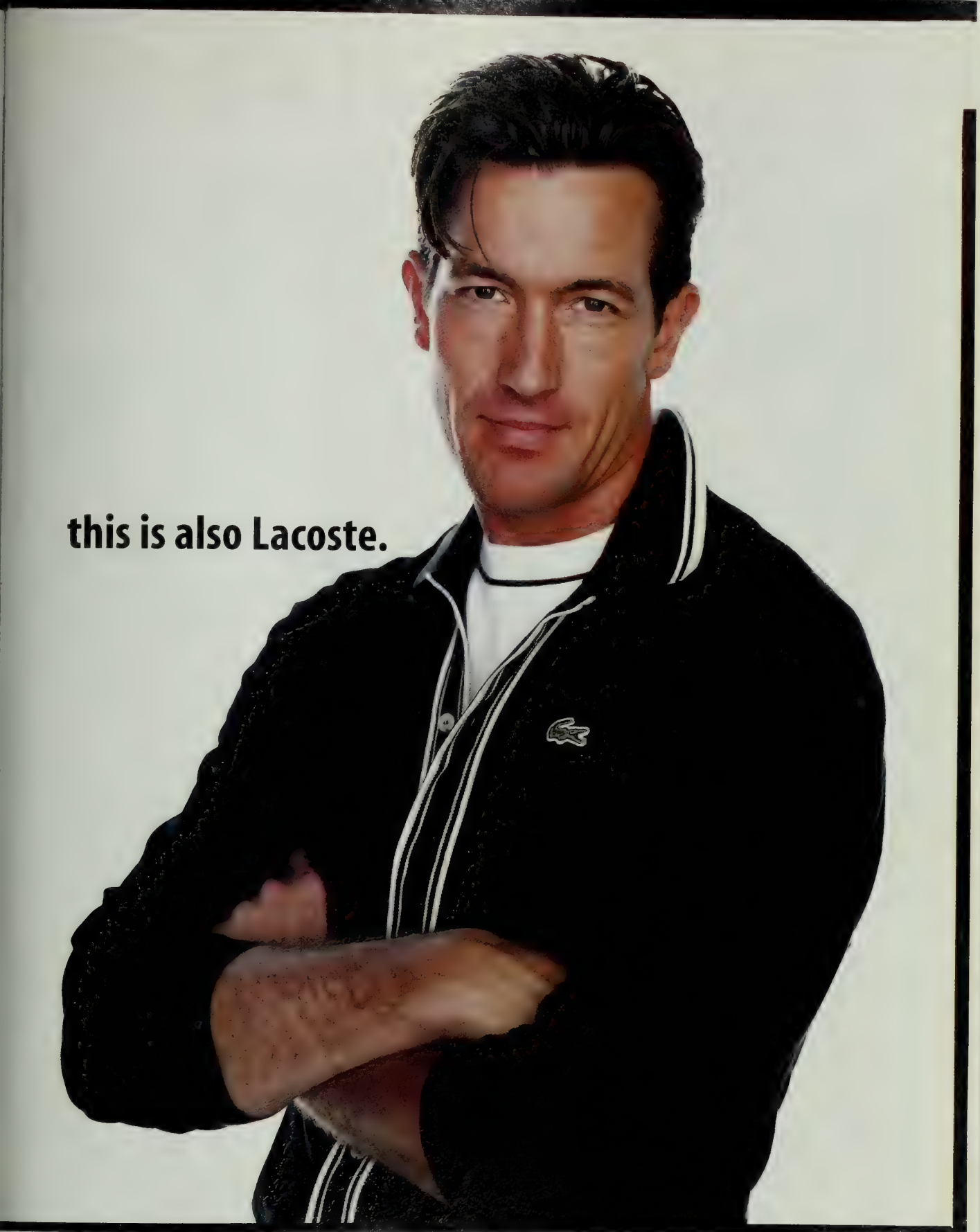
Skyy presents The Hurlyburly Cocktail
From Harry Denton's Starlight Room, bartender and "beverage specialist" Tony Abou-Ganim has created The Hurlyburly Cocktail. The name is taken from Shakespeare's Macbeth, "When the hurlyburly's done, When the battle's lost and won."

11/2 oz. SKYY VODKA
1/2 oz. Cointreau
1 oz. Sweet and Sour
1/2 oz. Fresh Orange Juice
1/2 oz. Cranberry Juice
Dried Cranberries

Pour all ingredients over ice in mixing cup, shake, and strain into an oversized chilled martini glass. Garnish with dried cranberries.

this is Lacoste.

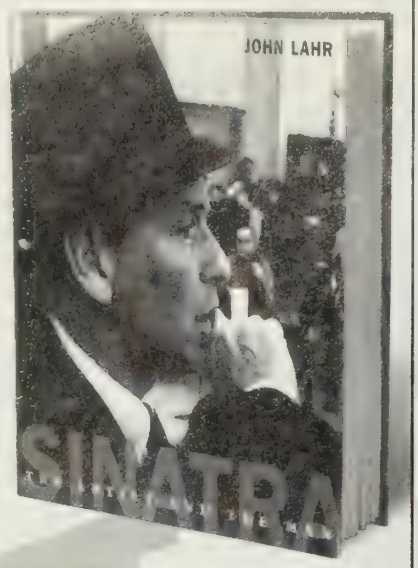




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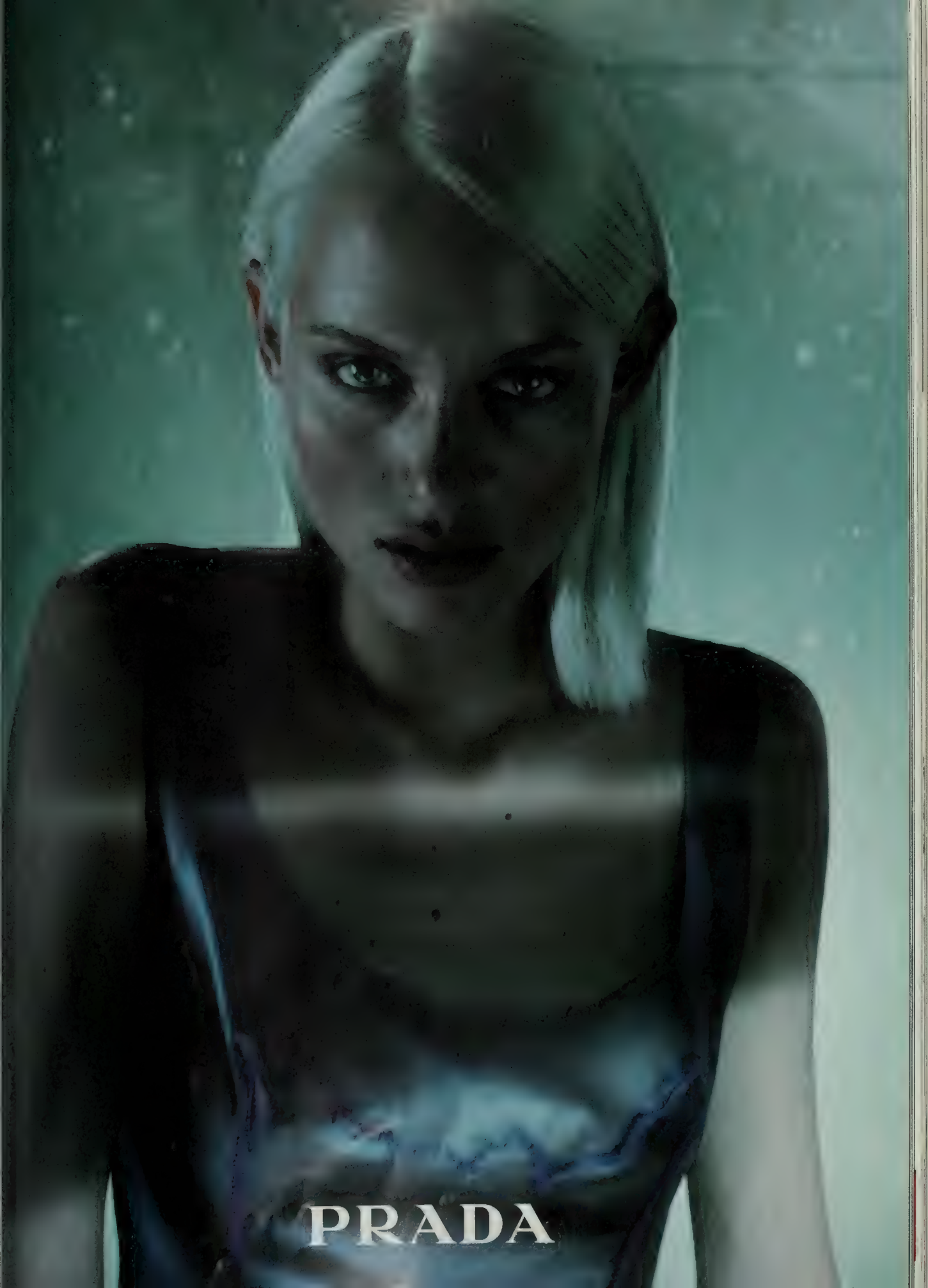
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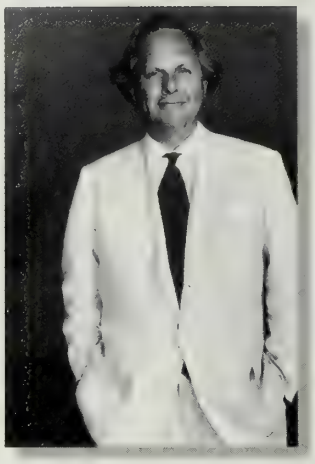


NEW AGE


Diane
DIANE VON FURSTENBERG
NO AGE


TSE

Potemkin on the Potomac



If you happened to be strolling along Pennsylvania Avenue the other day, you might have noticed a man walking his pug not far from the White House. The man was tall and well dressed, and on his back he wore a small paper sign. D.C. RESIDENT, the sign read. POLITICAL ASYLUM NOW! Who could blame the fellow his outrage? Washington, D.C.—the 67-square-mile physical city that cowers behind official Washington's Potemkin village of limestone, boulevards, and highballs at Sally and Ben's—is a mess. It's as if the capital's moral corruption is starting to manifest itself physically.

As D.C. resident Christopher Hitchens writes in his essay on page 106, "District of Contempt," at a time when tuberculosis cases are declining in the rest of the country, the most recent federal figures indicate that TB incidence in Washington, D.C., increased by more than a third—the rate is now 50 percent higher than that of any state. The drinking water is at times a certifiable health hazard. The morgue has been overrun with cockroaches, and one of the post offices with rats. Almost half the city's police motorcycles and as many as a third of its fire trucks have gone out of service at one time or another. Even the big-ladder truck earmarked for fires at the White House has been briefly out of operation.

As for political Washington, underneath the mascara of blue blazers, backslapping bonhomie, and watercooler chat about the president, it is a city being strangled by legalized corruption in the form of campaign finance. As contributing editor Carl Bernstein notes in this issue, it is the band of $500-an-hour superlobbyists led by Tommy Boggs, whom he profiles this month ("King of the Hill," page 174), that control the flow of funds and the corollary influence. The average senator now adds at least $15,000 a week to his war chest, and considerably more during a campaign. Much of this money comes from corporations via lobbyists like Boggs and Vernon Jordan. When banty Jack Valenti dropped to No. 2 on *The National Journal*'s list of the highest-paid trade-association lobbyists, he didn't sigh with relief—*he took issue with the paper's methodology.*

Washington is a lot like Atlantic City in a way—well, in a lot of ways, actually. Billions of outside dollars flow into Washington every year, but very little of that money sticks to the part of the city not directly affiliated with the core business. Atlantic City, beyond the casinos' shadows, is a slum. And the real Washington, behind the ceremonial capital, is becoming one, too. Hitchens points out that foreign diplomats mockingly declare Washington to be a hardship post, on a par with the capitals of Egypt and Zaire.

Graydon Carter

Pilgrimage to Lourdes





Madonna and her daughter, Lourdes Maria Ciccone Leon, photographed by Lo Goldstein

ON THE COVER: Madonna's sweater by Lucien Pellat-Finet. Necklace by Angela Pintaldi Diamond earrings by Elsa Peretti for Tiffany & Co Hair by Orlando Pita. Makeup by Tom Pecheux Manicure by Delia Bernerdino. Makeup and nai products from Clinique. Styled by Lori Goldstein Photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Mario Testino



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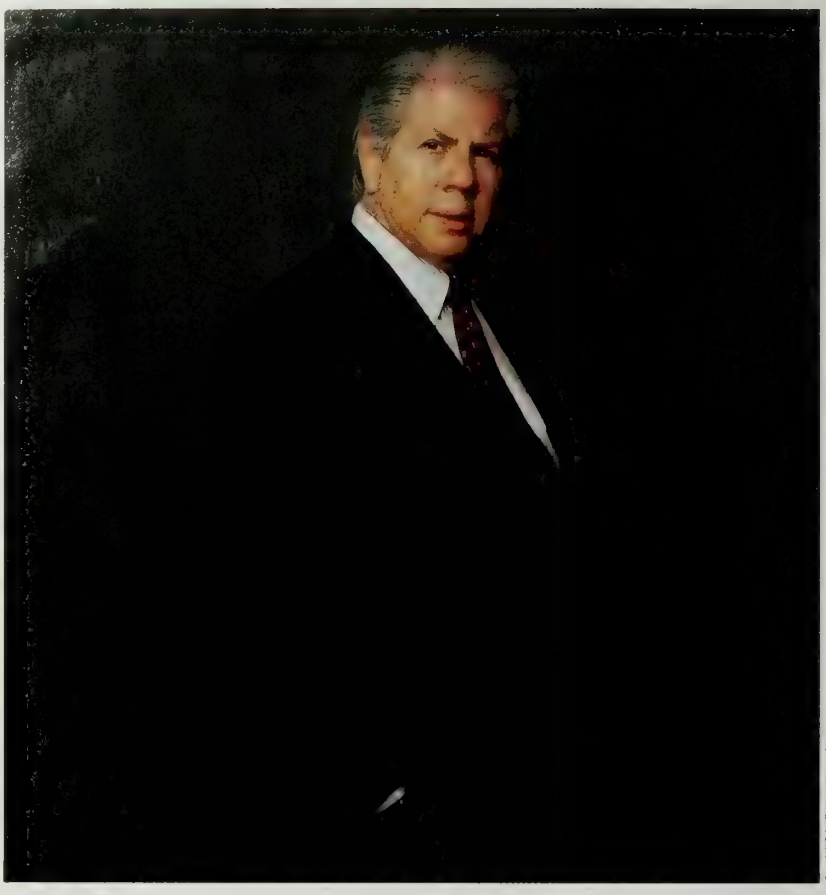
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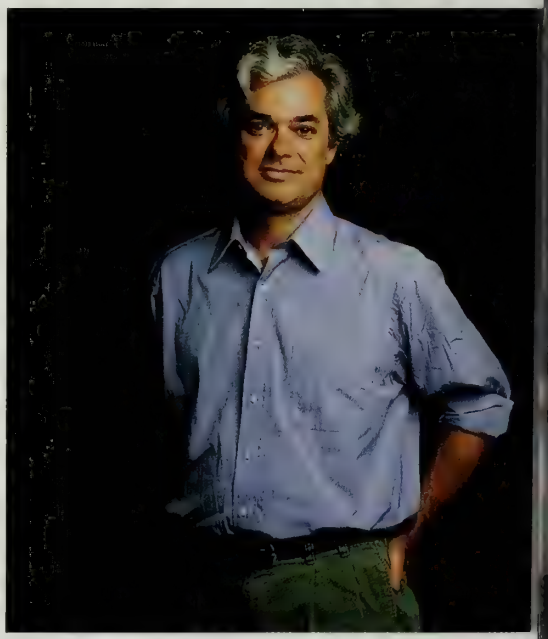
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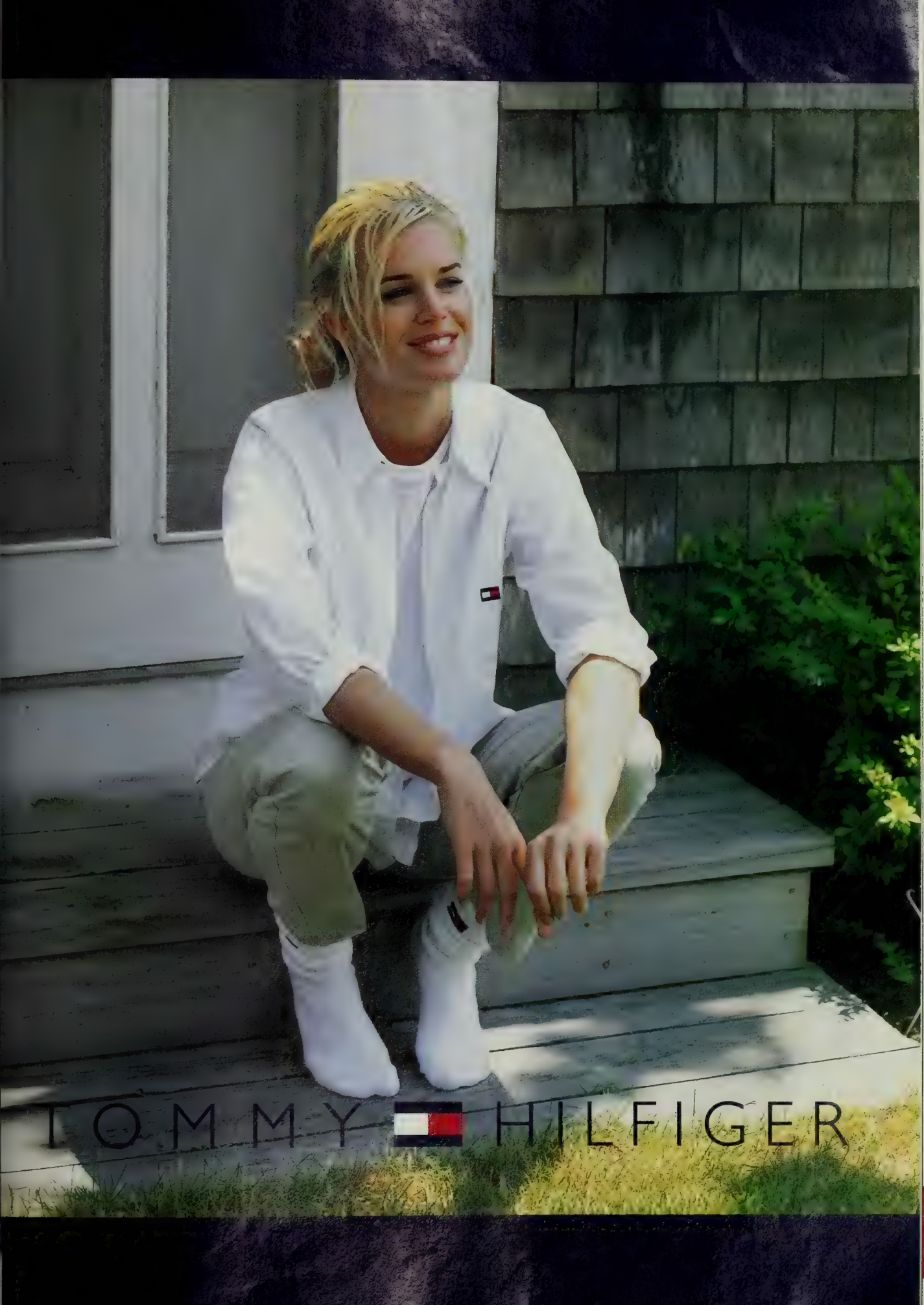
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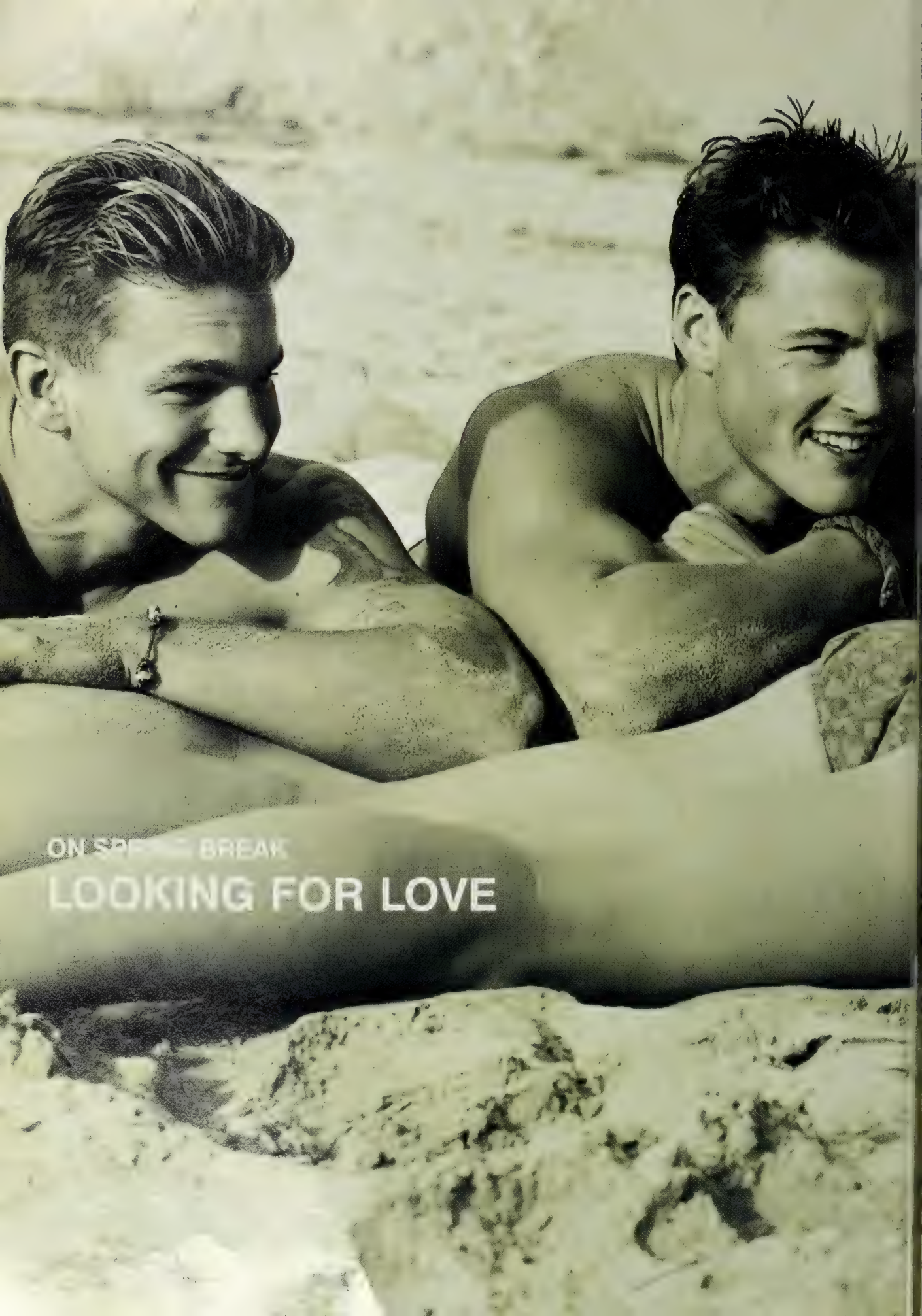
For this month's profile of superlobbyist Tommy Boggs, contributing editor **Carl Bernstein** returned to Washington, site of his most famous story: Watergate. Bernstein, who now lives in New York, is the author or co-author of four books, including *All the President's Men* and the best-seller *His Holiness: John Paul II and the Hidden History of Our Time,* which was recently released in paperback. These days, though, Bernstein, a former rock critic, is enjoying the Christmas gifts given to him by his two teenage sons—complete sets of singles by the Police and Prince.



"When David Halberstam was writing on the civil-rights movement for *The Nashville Tennessean,*" says contributing editor **David Margolick,** "I was only eight and just coming into political consciousness." Later, only months before becoming a reporter for *The New York Times,* Margolick read *The Powers That Be,* Halberstam's book about American press empires. This month Margolick comes full circle by previewing *The Children,* Halberstam's book about the civil-rights workers he covered nearly four decades ago.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 64


TOMMY HILFIGER


ON SPRING BREAK
LOOKING FOR LOVE

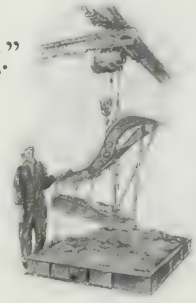


88 keys.
One legend.
Steinway.

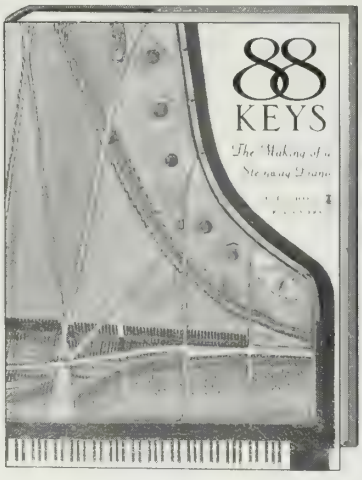


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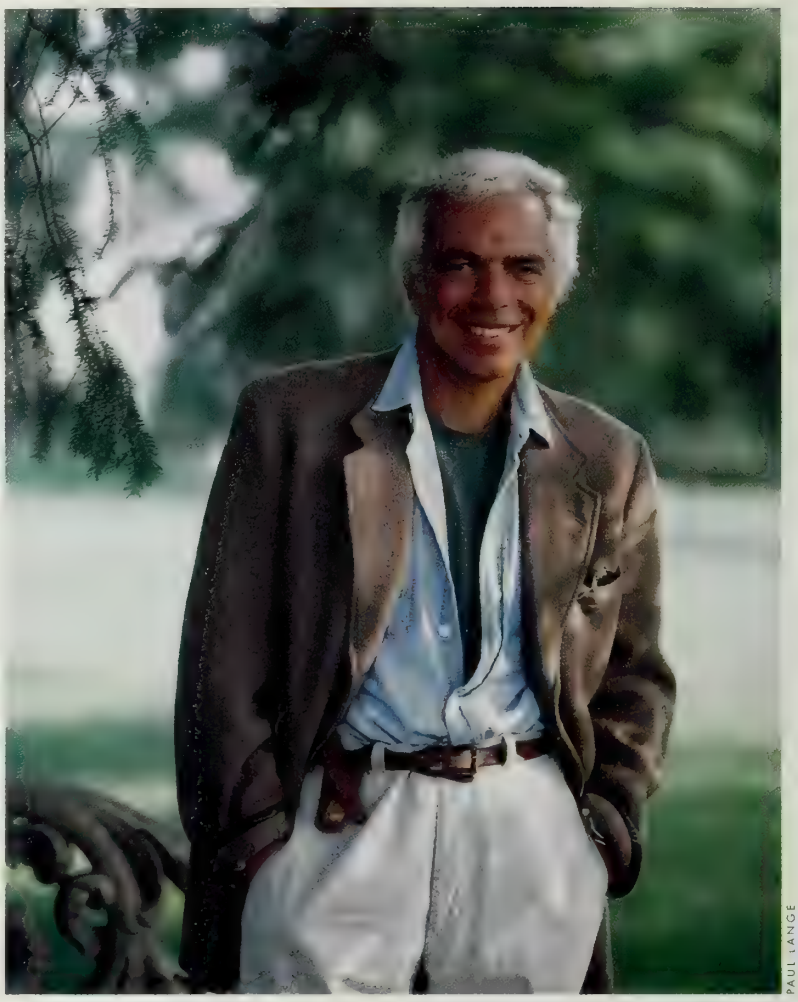
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 60



PAUL LANGE

Since the early 70s, **Ralph Lauren's** impact on the fashion world has been immeasurable. This month Lauren, the chairman and C.E.O. of Polo Ralph Lauren, nominates his friend and colleague *Harper's Bazaar* editor Liz Tilberis for the *V.F.* Hall of Fame. Last month, Lauren received the Council of Fashion Designers of America's prestigious Award for Humanitarian Leadership, in honor of his wide-ranging philanthropic projects.



MARION ETTLINGER

"I grew up looking at art," says novelist **A. M. Homes,** who in this issue writes about photographer Berenice Abbott. "My parents didn't really know how to entertain children," she recalls, "so they would take us to museums." Now, when she's on book tours, Homes always visits the local museums because "it's how I orient myself in a city." Homes's most recent novel is *The End of Alice,* and she's currently at work on her next one.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 72



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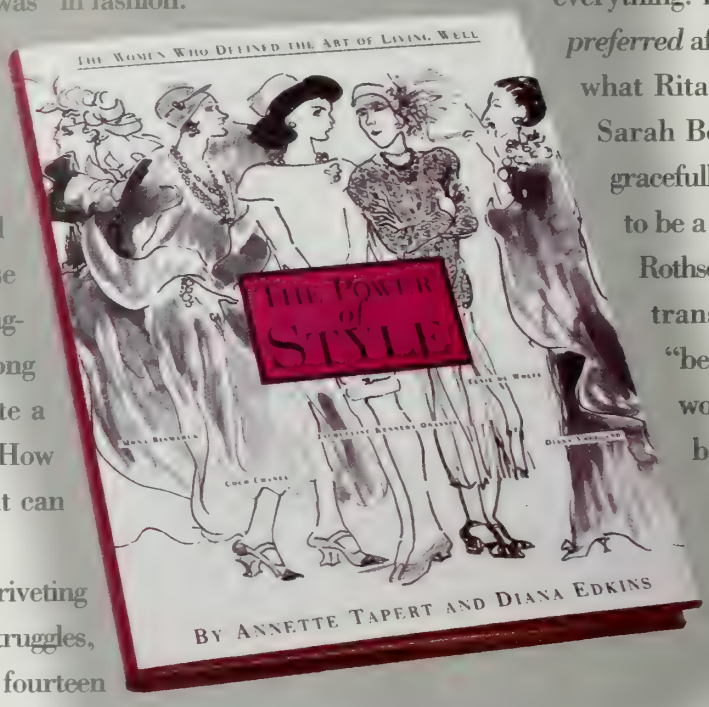
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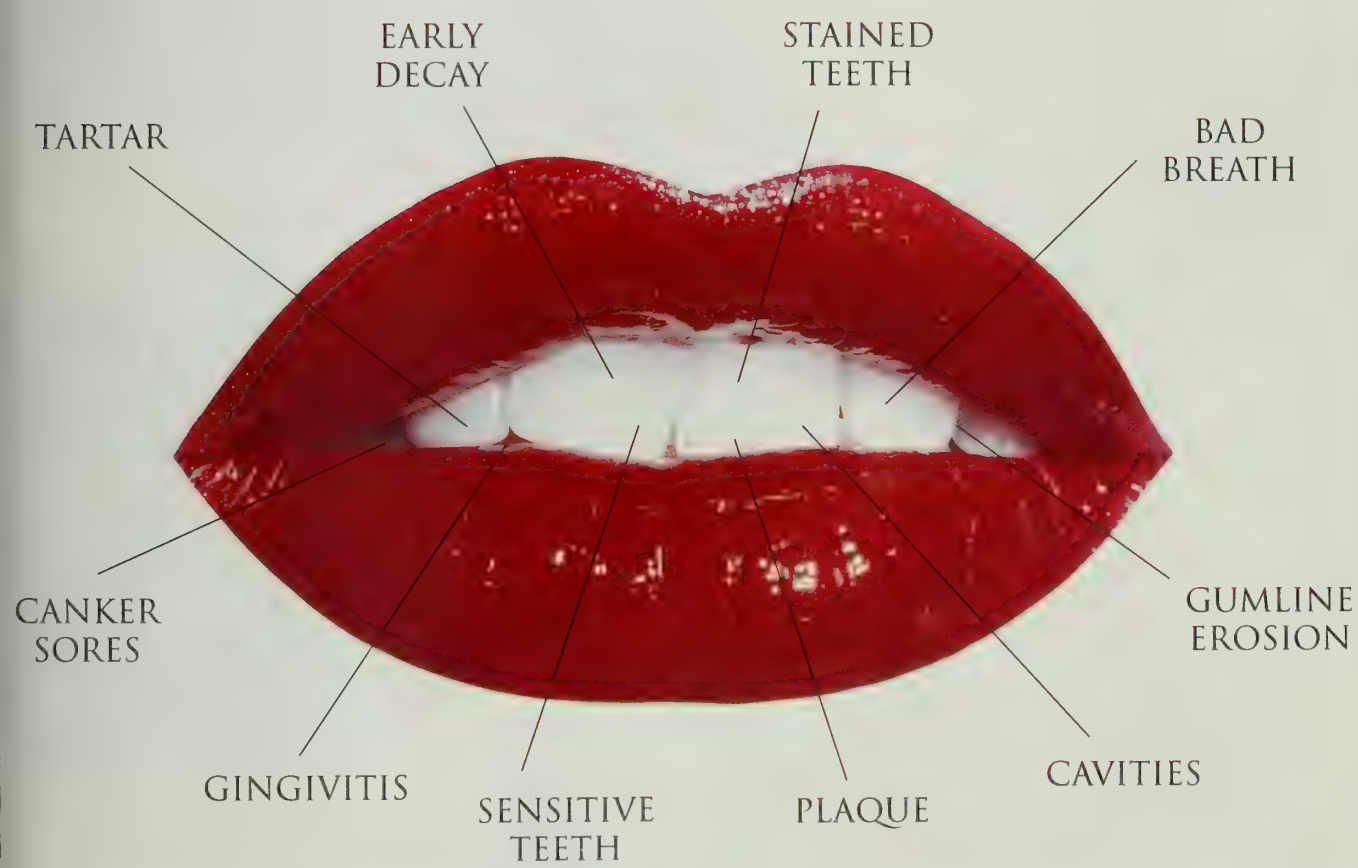
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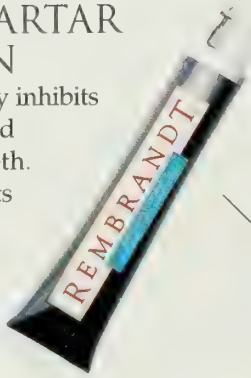
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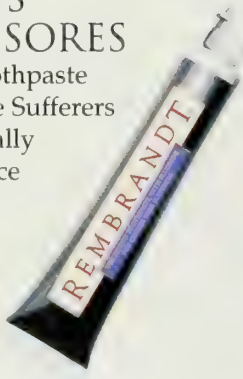
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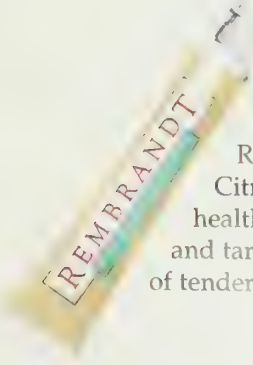




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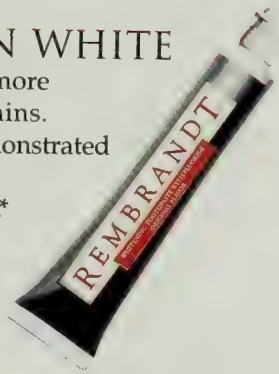
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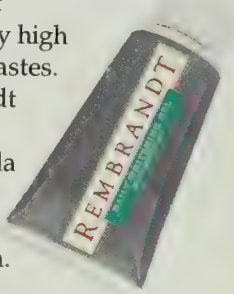
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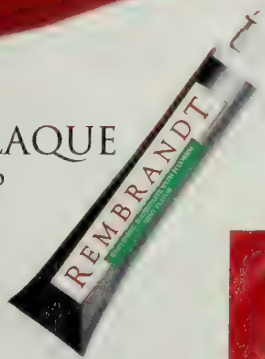
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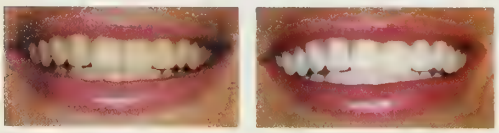
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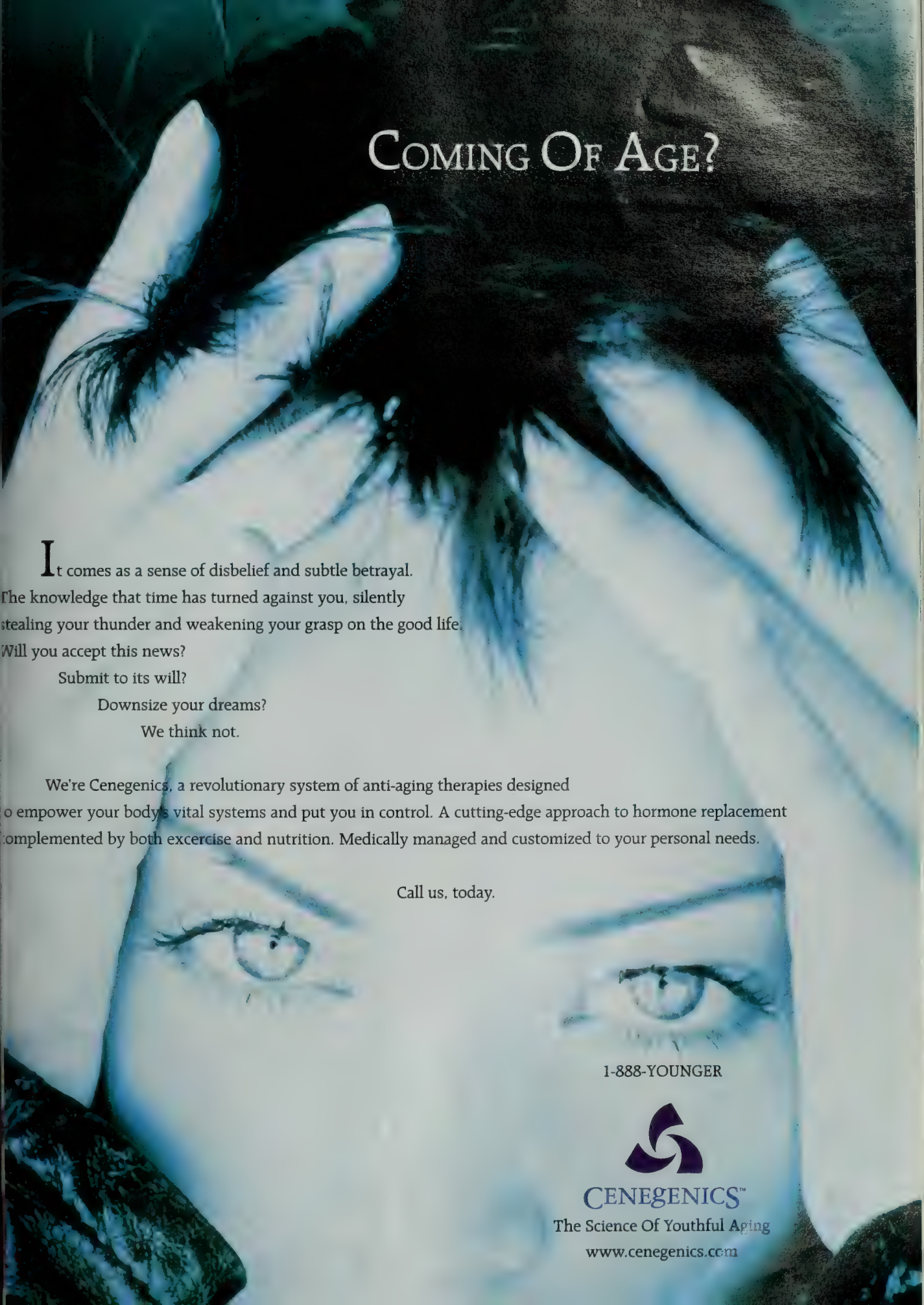


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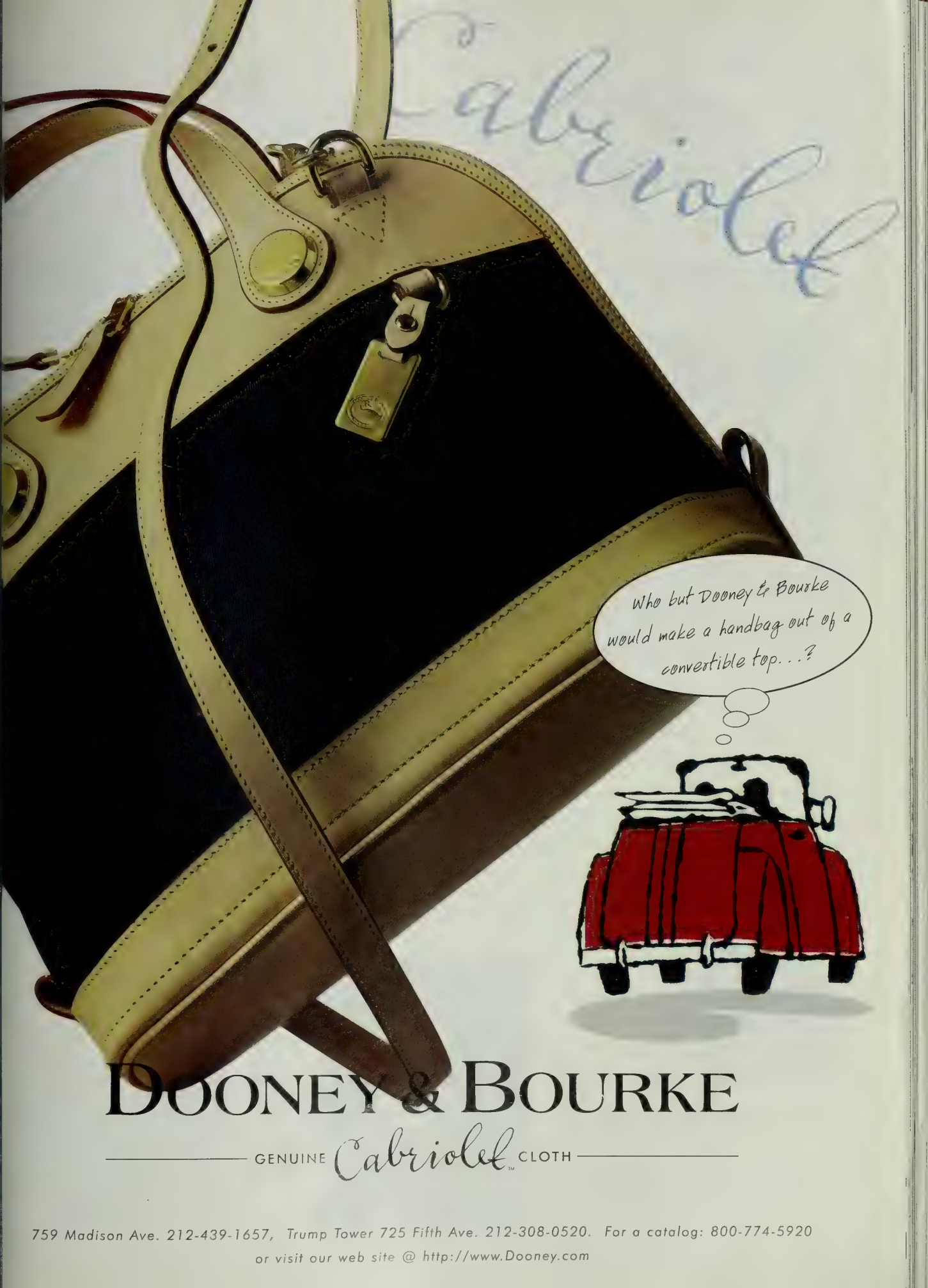
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 64



DANA BROWN

After living in Washington, D.C., for 16 years, contributing editor **Christopher Hitchens** is making a temporary move—and no wonder, given his criticism of the capital city in this month's issue. Hitchens will spend the spring teaching at the University of California at Berkeley School of Journalism, where he is a Koret Foundation Teaching Fellow.



GASPER TRINGALE

"I was sitting in a restaurant downtown, awaiting her arrival," contributing editor **Ingrid Sischy** says of her second meeting with this month's cover subject, Madonna, a profile of whom begins on page 204. "I looked out the window and there she was, walking down the stairs to the entrance—and she was all alone. I was incredibly struck by the moment; it was as though I could see what she had been like when she first arrived in New York—alone, with her pack on her back, determined to be heard."



NINA BRAMHALL

"I've always liked stories about people accused of murder," says contributing editor **Judy Bachrach.** "Murderers act out what everyone else only thinks about." In this issue, Bachrach writes about Virginia heiress Susan Cummings, who stands accused of murdering her lover, polo player Roberto Villegas. Like Cummings, Bachrach spent part of her childhood in Switzerland, so she understands Cummings's sense of displacement. "That kind of alienation leads to all sorts of weirdnesses," she says. "Such as murder and writing."



"I'm a slow-talking Chicago suburbanite and she's a streetwise Bronx cookie." That's how **George Rush** describes himself and his wife, Joanna Molloy, with whom he writes a gossip column for New York's *Daily News*. "It works—if one of us has managed to offend someone, the other will say, 'He does that to me too!'" As for their private life, Rush and Molloy honor one rule: Once the lights are out, there's no more talking about boldfaced names. On page 244, Rush reports on a marriage that has been significantly less successful than his own—that of Alec and Jocelyne Wildenstein.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 76



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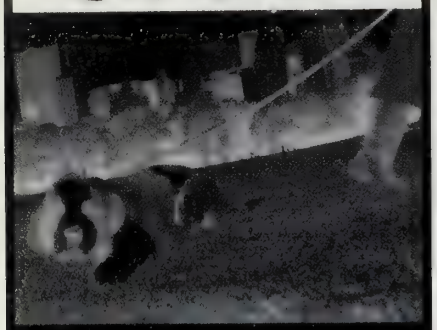

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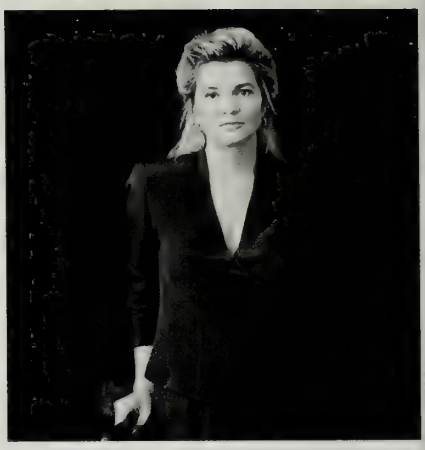
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 72



BILL 7OLES

"I write about really weird men with a lot of money and power," says **Suzanna Andrews.** Born in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, she is the daughter of an American diplomat and lived abroad until she attended Vassar College and Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs. She then became a freelance writer, living in Europe and the United States. "I spent many years trying desperately *not* to be a business writer," says Andrews, who this month writes about the controversy surrounding art dealer Alec Wildenstein.



TIM SHEAFFER

Many of the characters in **Mordecai Richler's** 10 novels are Jews from Montreal—including the protagonist of *Barney's Version,* his acclaimed new book. Given the locale, it follows that most of Richler's characters are hockey nuts. Growing up in Montreal, Richler was obsessed with the hometown Canadiens. "My friends and I all played hockey," he says, "and we all went to games at the Forum whenever possible." Richler, who on page 222 assesses the state of professional hockey, says he's still a fan—but "a disgruntled one."

"I am much chummier with felons than I ever imagined I would be," says **Tom Mashberg.** "Criminals call me collect from prison." Mashberg spent most of his career as a reporter for *The Boston Globe* and the *Boston Herald,* where he wrote "fairly mundane exposés." Then, while investigating the infamous art heist at Boston's Gardner Museum, Mashberg helped to bring museum officials, the F.B.I., and those claiming access to the masterpieces to the bargaining table. This prompted his appearance on *Nightline*—and his article on page 214.



JOHN GOODMAN



TIMOTHY GREENFIELD-SANDERS

In the 1970s, **Timothy Greenfield-Sanders** attended the American Film Institute, along with future directors Amy Heckerling (*Clueless*) and Martin Brest (*Beverly Hills Cop*). "I took portraits of visitors to A.F.I.—Hitchcock, for one. In the end, I was more interested in the portraits." Now Greenfield-Sanders, who photographed hockey's Olympians for this issue, has returned to film. His documentary, *Lou Reed: Rock and Roll Heart,* was an entrant at this year's Sundance Film Festival.



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BRINGING OUT BABY

Every picture tells a story, but few tell of the unexpected joys—and pitfalls—involved in the actual photo shoot. When Mario Testino arrived in Miami to photograph Madonna for this month's cover story—during White Party Week, a series of fund-raising events for people with H.I.V.—he and his crew had to fight through hordes of men before arriving at the beachfront location. But seeing Madonna and her 16-month-old daughter, Lourdes—who did nothing but laugh—made the trip worth it. "Lourdes has given Madonna a lot of peace," says Testino. Timothy Greenfield-Sanders had to photograph larger bundles of joy: 20 of the N.H.L.'s Olympic-bound stars. The assignment—an exercise in international diplomacy—required him to learn some emergency Russian ("*Perestante dvigatsya!,*" which means "Stop moving!") and to hold the attention of Team Sweden, whose players kept hitting on the fashion assistants. Jonathan Becker, who photographed "both camps" of the Wildenstein divorce battle, spent seven hours with Jocelyne Wildenstein at the family's New York town house—but not before smuggling his equipment past overprotective security guards with whom he later had a contretemps. "*Spooky,*" says Becker. And Harry Benson endured high winds while standing atop a 20-foot scissorlift to photograph Washington, D.C., for this month's story on the decaying capital. Says the acrophobic Benson, "I felt I was going to end up a hideous mess







From top: **Mario Testino wi Madonna and Lourdes in Golden Beach, Fl Clockwise from top left, Team U.S.A.'s Jeremy Roenic Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, Team U.S.A.'s Bry Berard, *V.F.* shoot coordinator Sharon Suh, Tea U.S.A.'s Bill Guerin, *V.F.* fashion stylist Tina Skoura and *V.F.* art director David Harris. Jonathan Beck with Jocelyne Wildenstein in her New York hom Harry Benson on location in Washington, D.**



GREG NORMAN

COLLECTION











BRINGING OUT BABY

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From top: **Mario Testino wit Madonna and Lourdes in Golden Beach, Fla Clockwise from top left, Team U.S.A.'s Jeremy Roenick Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, Team U.S.A.'s Brya Berard, *V.F.* shoot coordinator Sharon Suh, Tea U.S.A.'s Bill Guerin, *V.F.* fashion stylist Tina Skoura and *V.F.* art director David Harris. Jonathan Becke with Jocelyne Wildenstein in her New York hom Harry Benson on location in Washington, D.C**







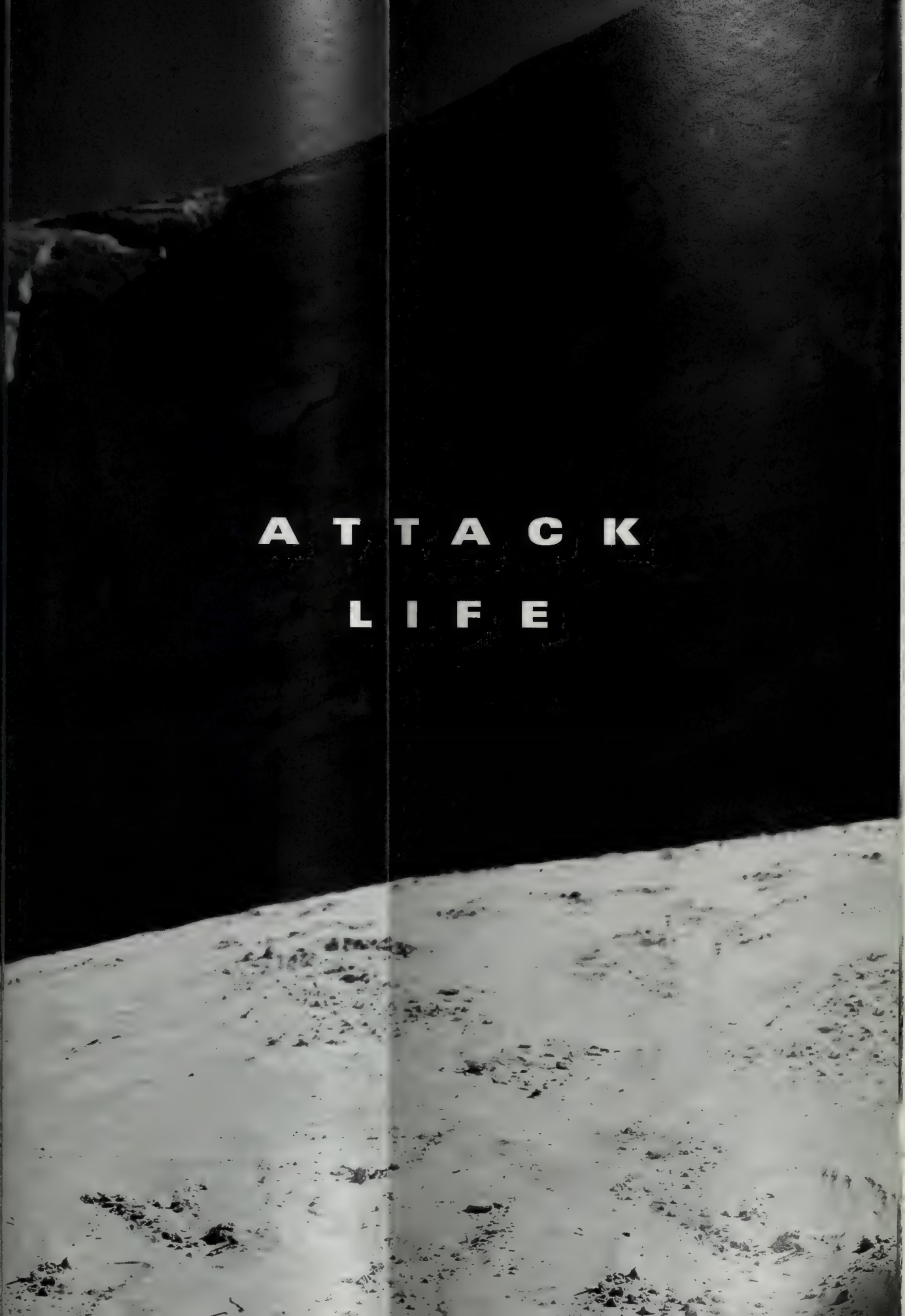

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AGE RAGE

Readers revel in Fran Lebowitz as she tells us all to grow up

Fran Lebowitz's "On Age" [January] brought tears of laughter and out-loud chuckles. The most delightful and outrageously witty observations on the difference between growing old and growing up I've ever read—and such truth in those observations!

BETTY BUTLER
Smyrna, Georgia

SINCE I HAVE almost reached the ideal age of 23 myself, I understand and completely agree with Lebowitz—age obsession is both ridiculous and unwarranted. It seems that in this time of political correctness we still discriminate on the basis of age.

JULIA NOBLE
Harwich, Massachusetts

FRAN LEBOWITZ assures us that it was indeed a step up for elephants to become pianos. This lady is to philosophy what a Clavinova is to the Boston Philharmonic.

PHYLIS CALLIER
New York, New York

IN A WORLD where a man about to die is denied a last cigarette because the jail is a nonsmoking facility, where a wedding costs $1.7 million, and where the *Titanic* sinks yet again, the voice of Fran Lebowitz is not that of a "contrarian humorist." It is the voice of sanity, of truth in a world gone mad with equivocation.

MARI CARMEN CAPIN-HOPF
Montreal, Quebec

Death Is in the Details

I'VE JUST READ "Scenes from an Execution," by Christopher Hitchens [January], and wish everyone in the world could be made to sit down and read it, too. I agree with him wholeheartedly about executions' being butchery in this day and age. "Legalized murder" in cold blood.

JEAN HENDERSON
Odessa, Texas

WHAT MAKES the planned, bureaucratized death of a killer more abhorrent than the premeditated shooting of an innocent human being with a handgun? Nothing except that there is no Christopher Hitchens or other "deatharazzi" sitting safely behind a curtained plate-glass window, fussing about the décor of death, witnessing the victim being put to death by a lethal injection of lead by a self-appointed executioner.

PATRICIA MAHER
Vancouver, British Columbia

MR. HITCHENS FOUND the will to write about how a killer's time in Vietnam turned him into a murderer. How insulting to people who served their country in Vietnam and came back to their families as loving husbands and fathers. The article said nothing about the daughter of the officer who was killed. How did she grow up? Was she able to put her life together after the horror that she suffered?

POLINA S. JAEGER
Moscow, Russia

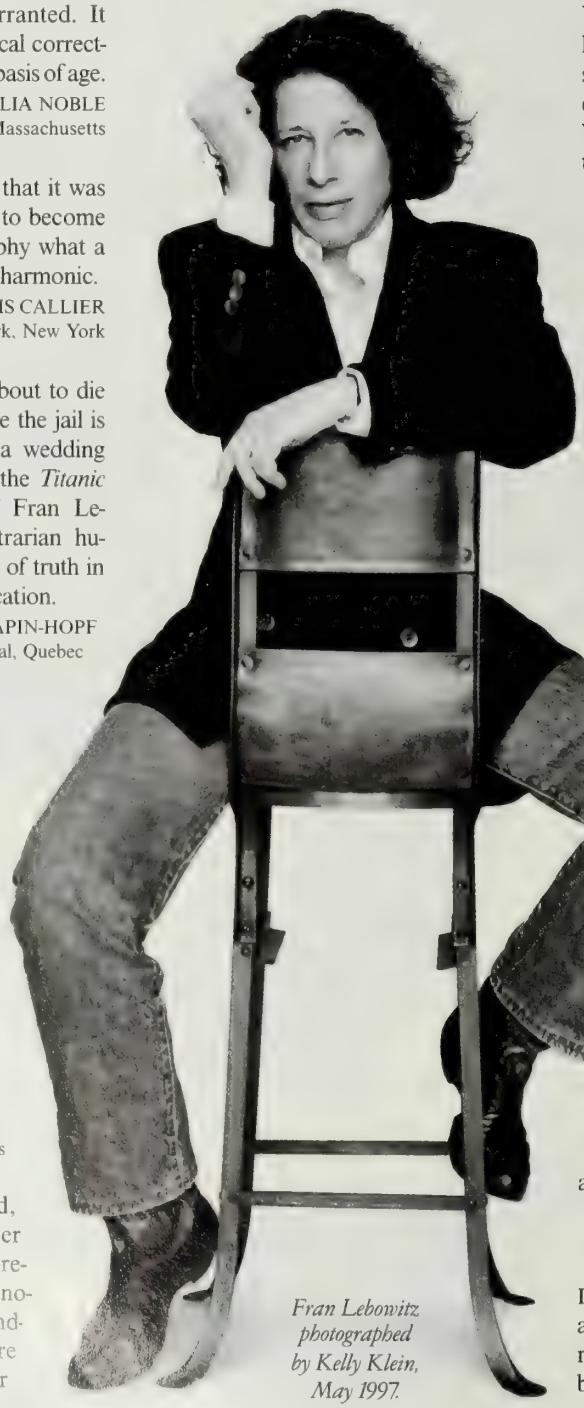
AFTER YEARS of trying to come to terms with the death penalty, I can now say, having read Christopher Hitchens, that I'm at last clear that capital punishment is indeed barbaric, and not for us to undertake in the name of a higher power.

J. SANCHEZ
Forest Hills, New York

WE MAY WELL BE one of the last countries legally practicing the death penalty, but we're also the only people routinely celebrating violence while ritualizing the abuse of weaker human beings. We do so daily—on television, at the movies, in the sports arena, in the neighborhood crack den, and at home. Ours is not yet a truly civilized society, and so it follows that, as long as we won't stop murder and mayhem at home, in school, and in the workplace, we cannot condone tolerance and forgiveness in prison or on death row. As long as we breed media monsters such as Timothy McVeigh and Jeffrey Dahmer, America can only practice what it chooses to preach. There's money and a big audience for all of it.

NATHANIEL S. JOHNSON
New York, New York

I SUGGEST we do as Hitchens asks, and abolish the death penalty. To replace it, death-row inmates should be shackled at the wrist to bleeding



Fran Lebowitz photographed by Kelly Klein, May 1997.


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hearts like Hitchens so that people like him can "feel their pain."

JOHN BABER
Titusville, Florida

EXECUTION should be viewed as punishment, not as a deterrent.

MARY F. STRAUB
Alsip, Illinois

HOW INTERESTING. Hitchens opposes Mother Teresa in one issue and joins her opposition to the death penalty in the next.

PETER LAURENCE
San Diego, California

MR. HITCHENS'S eloquent article doesn't change my feelings. I support the death penalty. It is a certain ending to a very uncertain process. I believe there is behavior for which a citizen can and should lose his franchise on life.

RONALD S. RUIZ
New Orleans, Louisiana

It Happened One Life

DEEPEST THANKS to you and Amy Fine Collins for the informative, respectful, and moving article on the great Claudette Colbert, "A Perfect Star" [January]. For years I was acquainted with an eccentric woman about Ms. Colbert's age who had been a lifelong fan of the star's. Ms. Colbert had welcomed her backstage at many of her plays, and there were occasional notes exchanged. A few years before the actress died, this woman—terminally ill, alone, and penniless—wrote Ms. Colbert with the sad news of her health. By return mail she received a sizable check to help her, as Ms. Colbert put it, "over any rough spots."

DOUG McCLELLAND
Bradley Beach, New Jersey



An electric chair in a Richmond, Va., prison, which is now closed. Most executions are by lethal injection, which is supposedly, Hitchens wrote, "more predictable than burning, shooting, strangling, and gassing."

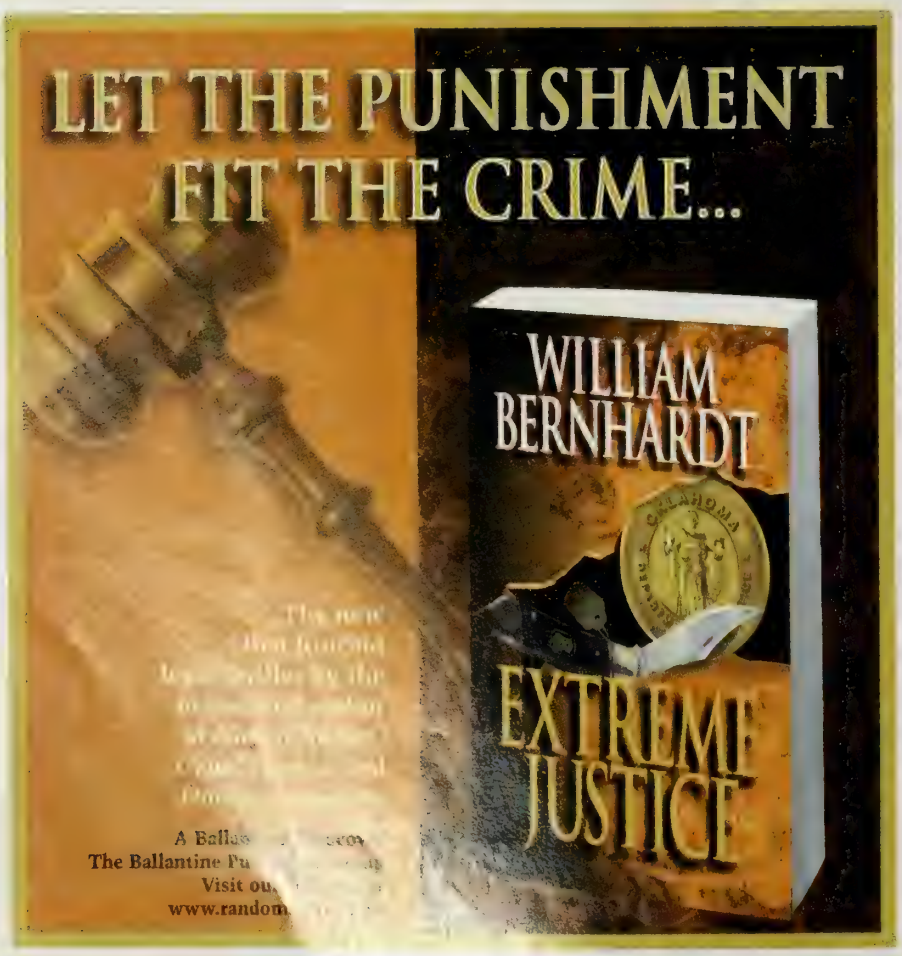
ONE DAY IN 1952, my wife, Vada, and I were about to enter the cathedral in Toledo, Spain. Standing there in some distress was Claudette Colbert. She had no head covering and didn't want to go in without one. Vada had just bought a Spanish lace cloth for a bedside table, and offered it. Claudette deftly redefined its purpose and went into the great cathedral as a proper lady of the Catholic faith should. I don't know how she looked to God, but she seemed very fetching to us!

BARNEY OLDFIELD
Beverly Hills, California

AH, AN EXCELLENT article about Claudette Colbert. Very balanced, good writing, and wonderful photos. Bravo!

I spent my childhood at the old Astoria Studios in Queens, New York, watching the big stars slink around in tight white satin and white fox furs. Every day was an adventure! They were all friendly except for one English male star, who called us "filthy brats." And he was so amusing and proper on-screen!

MARGO GILDEA
Oakland, California



Leo Ascendant

CATHY HORYN'S profile of Leonardo DiCaprio ["Leonardo Takes Wing," January] is one of the best I have ever read about this incredible actor. I particularly enjoyed the commentary from his friends. Their sarcastic, honest wit nicely balanced what DiCaprio had to say about his life and success.

NANCY HESLIN
Albany, New York

YOUR COVER of Leonardo DiCaprio was absolutely out of this world.

MICKY A. GUTIER
Phoenix, Arizona

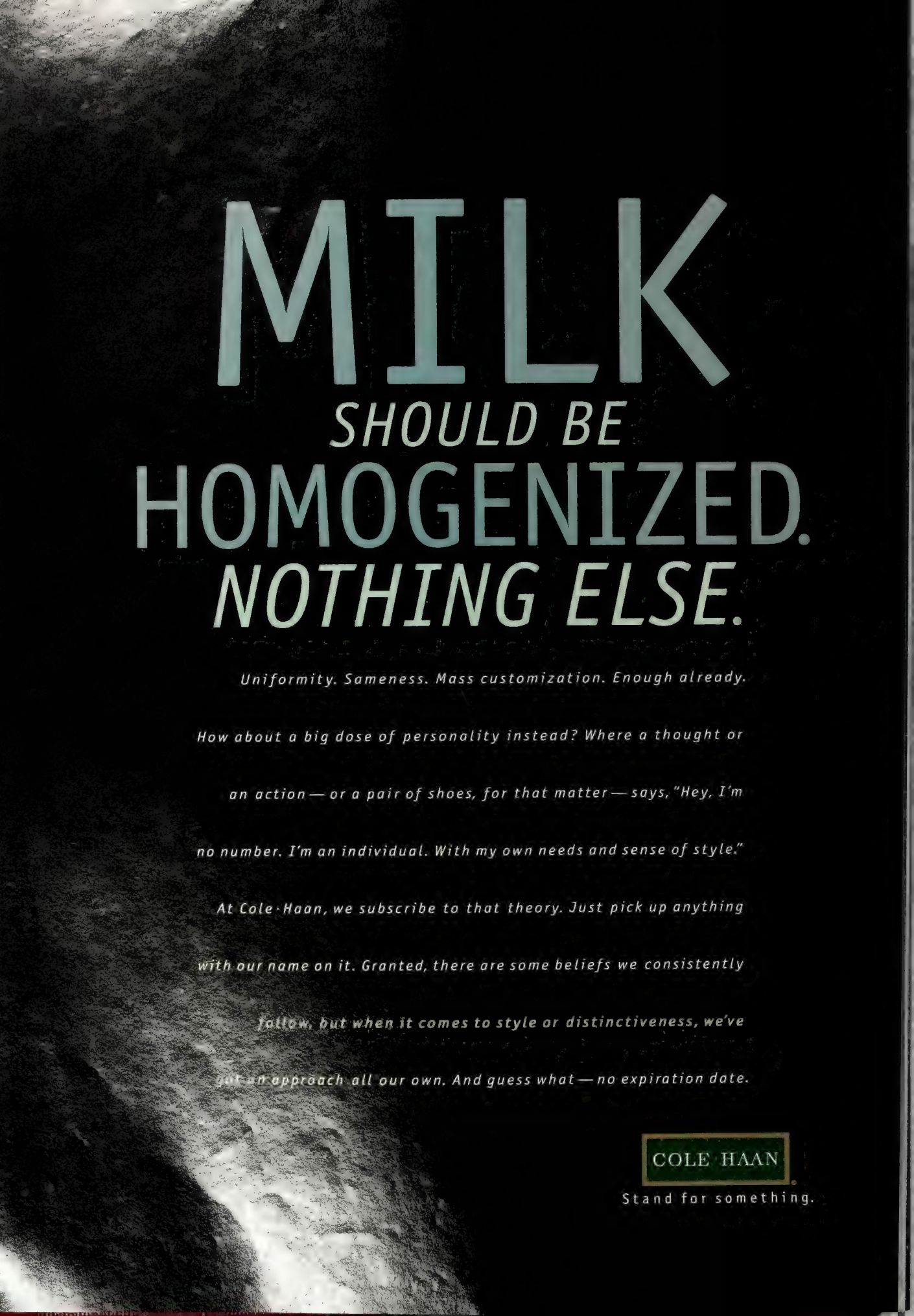
LEONARDO'S BEST ASSET is just being himself, which is quite rare these days.

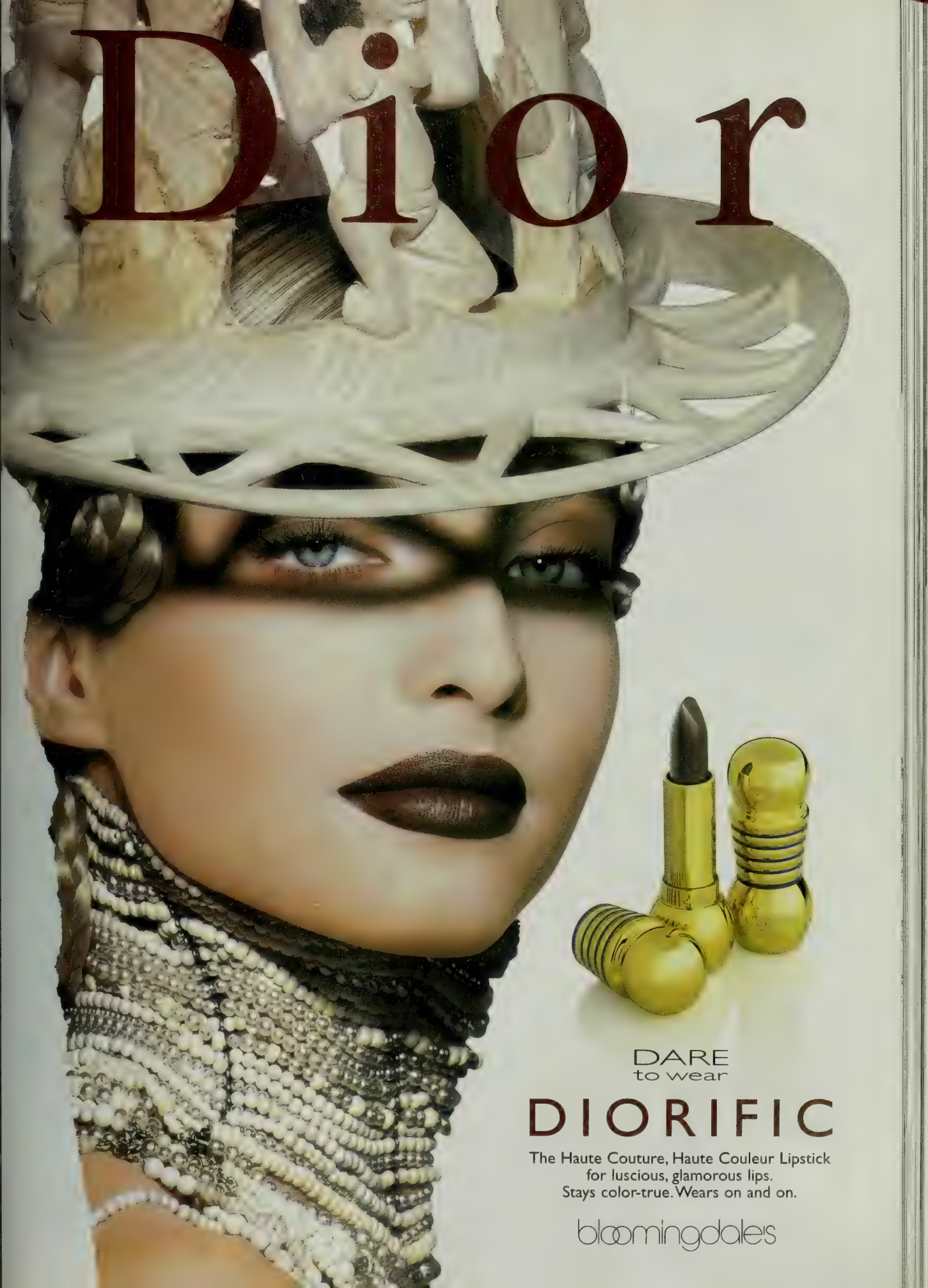
TINA GLIBOTA
Merrillville, India

I'VE LIKED Leonardo DiCaprio ever since he gave that incredible performance in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*. He's not only a talented but also a versa

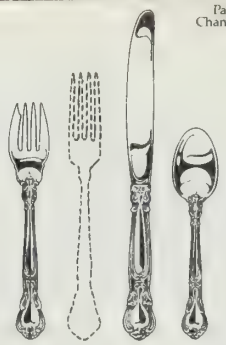


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Letters

Hanukkah presents, I was thankful I turned the pages and found Madonna and the Kabbalah ["God and Man in Hollywood," by Kim Masters, December]. Thank goodness someone out there gets it. She probably would have had a good time at our party.

JILL SEVELOW
Homewood, Illinois

WHEN I READ about those who plan to retire by age 40, I thought, The only thing that I'll retire by 40 is one of my credit cards!

RODNEY D. CUNNINGHAM
Waite Park, Minnesota

Conduct Unbecoming

THE DESCRIPTION of the events that occurred on the night that Abner Louima was attacked nauseated me ["Incident in the 70th Precinct," by Marie Brenner, December]. The police officers allegedly involved are a disgrace not only to their profession but also to humanity. They seem to think that they are above the law, and in many ways this attitude is reinforced by superiors and politicians.

LYNN RIZZO
Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey

I BELIEVE THE POLICE are unfairly used as the point men for all our social problems. Police brutality obviously exists, but why? I don't believe it's because the police are inherently sadistic.

I hope Abner Louima recovers as much as possible from his experience and can win a following of people who will work for peace rather than vengeance.

ELIZABETH KROON
Northampton, Massachusetts

Ahmet's Empire

"DEVIL IN A BESPOKE SUIT," by Leslie Bennetts [January], is really impressive. I was shocked to learn that the Ertegun family wanted to join the Turkish government in funding a chair in Turkish studies at Princeton. The Turkish government has long sought to suppress information about the Armenian genocide. By supporting those who would suppress information about past abuses, people like Ertegun contribute to new abuses.

PEDRO ZAROKIAN
Glendale, California

AHMET ERTEGUN made his fortune from the only original American art form, jazz. He is as American as they come. He is also of Turkish ancestry. He wants his heritage included in American education. Other hyphenated Americans have done exactly what he has done, with no whimper from any corner. Ertegun, however, is accused of "accommodating" an evil government.

ALI F. SEVIN
Fort Washington, Maryland

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...ne: A policeman stands guard outside the 70th Precinct, where on August 9, 1997, ...ouima was allegedly beaten and sodomized. Four officers have been charged.

PRESENTS COURTNEY LOVE PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRUCE WEBER






VERSACE










VERSACE
MEN'S COUTURE

"Nothing works here, and nobody cares."



Darkness visible: Slums in the shadow of the Capitol building, August 1940. Nearly 60 years later, conditions are not much improved.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 106

household in every seven boasts a city employee, even if—as a recent survey established—he is dead and drawing his check from the other side of that noxious morgue.) Contempt for them as they called for help, and found that the police and fire and ambulance departments were rusted and corroded by neglect and corruption. Contempt for them when they tried to do their mandatory form-filling, at the D.M.V. or anywhere else. Contempt for them as voters, denied the franchise by Congress and delivered up to local small-timers and kickback artists and players of the race card. And, finally, contempt for them when they tried to close their eyes with dignity. Thoroughgoing, jeering, taunting contempt. Insult upon insult from cradle to grave.

Nothing works here, and nobody cares. In winter, the unplowed snow serves at least to cover up the uncollected garbage. (The city's recycling contract has been struck down because the court found that evaluation of the bids was "plainly arbitrary"—for reasons as easily imagined as described.) The "drinking" water is subject to an "advisory" for those who are either very young or very old, or taking medication, or simply unwilling to imbibe, even when boiled, the cocktail of chlorine and shall we call it "bacterial" matter that comes from the city's fouled-up pipes. The potholes are a favorite joke among foreign diplomats, who gaily compare conditions in Cairo and Kinshasa and other hardship postings. The prisons—I'm coming to the prisons. The police department barely passes, if it passes at all, the old rule of thumb that a police department should at least catch more crooks than it employs. And as for the city's books, well, how can I phrase it? "Receivership" is one polite term. "Near junk-bond status" is yet another. If I wanted to retire here, I think I would elect to do so as a rat. Things are set up for rats. The other day, the post office at 14th Street and Irving NW had to be closed because rodents were devouring the mail. (And there was I, thinking that increased postal charges went to pay for the cost of *storing* the letters.)

The whole danger in writing about my hometown lies in the ever present temptation to try and be funny. Humor of a kind is a daily solvent. ("What's the difference between Clarence Thomas and Marion Barry?" "Marion Barry has coke in his pubic hair.") But the joke, if it is a joke, is turning sick. The crudest sorts of racism and racial innuendo are churning beneath the crust. And everybody has a story about the time when, for them personally, it ceased to be funny at all. My own "D.C. anecdote" involves breaking a lifetime's embargo on using any of my children for journalistic purposes. When my son tested positive for TB—an affliction that I thought had been banished roughly when Upton Sinclair wrote *The Jungle* or Lincoln Steffens proclaimed *The Shame of the Cities*—I resolved to do some unsmiling research. I found that, as of the latest annual federal figures, in March 1997, TB cases in Washington had increased by 36 percent, as against a *decline* of 7 percent in the United States as a whole. "The District" had a case rate 50 percent above the highest rate for any state. As my hometown paper put it, rather mildly I thought:

The District's ability to control the spread of TB also has deteriorated recently. Many public health workers have resigned or retired, and the city lacks enough dependable cars to bring daily doses of TB medicine to people. . . . "These vehicles break down constantly," said Michael S. A. Richardson, president of the DC Thoracic Society.

They have that in common with a number of other city-run vehicles, though not with those mayoral limousines which, with lights flashing and sirens blaring, hustle Marion Barry (mayor for 15 of the past 19 years) to his tennis appointments and, on at least one occasion, convey voters to the polls. Most of last November's municipal business was taken up with a scarcely believable demand by the mayor that he be awarded the personal use of a $625,000 luxury skybox at the soulless, predictable concrete mall that obliterates the city's once charming Chinatown and forms the new MCI arena. This in his capacity as chairman of the city's Sports Commission . . . The commissioners winced, but it was Barry who got to co-star with Clinton as the first ball was tipped there.

There are numerous ways of ending up in the city morgue. If you survive the TB and the nonpotable water, and you are menaced by violent crime, you can try calling the police department. Lots of luck. Your body is likely to have cooled before they show up. Last year, police chief Larry Soulsby fought hard to prevent the release of reports prepared (at a cost of a trifling $5 million) by the independent consultants Booz-Allen & Hamilton. It was easy to see why he was being so reticent. Serious cases were being dismissed in court because the evidence had been mislaid while in police hands. The reports found that most of the evidence kept in storage was over 10 years old, and recommended chucking out 96 percent of it. Seven percent of the police cars in the District have been "lost" and are un-

"One household in seven boasts a city employee."



Mayor for lifestyle: Mayor Marion Barry and former city administrator Michael Rogers being chauffeured in a Lincoln Town Car to a meeting with Georgetown University president Father Leo O'Donovan in 1995.

accounted for. Forty—*forty*—percent of the police department's motorcycles went unused because of repair backlogs or because "officers are not licensed" to drive them. Forty-nine members of the homicide unit—almost half the total personnel—had not closed a case in the course of the entire year. (Only 16 percent of D.C.'s cops manage to arrest anyone in a given 12 months.) The Justice Department had identified more than 100 homicides in four years that went unsolved because of elementary errors in police work. As against that, you might say, the homicide unit was discovered, in the preceding fiscal year, to have put in an overtime bill of $6 million. A useful term, "overtime abuse," had to be deployed to describe the dimensions of this well-run scam—the only thing in the homicide division that could be termed as fully functional. And three more expensive inquiries had to be got creaking under way, with the bill sent to the multiply abused taxpayer. All part of the cost of doing business.

Chief Soulsby was an important political ally of Mayor Barry's. Important in that he looked like what he was—a fat, doltish, white-bread southern sheriff out of Central Casting who could deflect charges of favoritism to blacks. Important, too, in that he shared the mayor's value system: lying on his résumé, for example, about an education he had (pretty obviously) never had. In other respects, the chief was the mayor's moral equal. He lived in the Lansburgh, a luxury high-rise apartment building. He paid one-third of the official rent for it. And he paid that in cash. Soulsby also had a roommate, one Lieutenant Jeffery Stowe, the head of the police department's special-investigations division. The were chums (both had parted from their wives), and in 1996, Stowe gave [illegible] a set of golf clubs worth $2,500 [illegible] F.B.I. became interested in Stowe b[illegible] his mortgage payments on another property were somewhat larger than his departmental salary. He was raising the extra money, the bureau now charges, by a practice known as "fairy-shaking." How *do* you "fairy-shake"? Well, if you are a cop, especially if you earn huge trust and a big salary for being in charge of "special investigations," you photograph men leaving gay nightspots and then check (from their license plates or perhaps from the telltale baby seat in the back) whether they are married. If they are, then offer to send their wives the photographs and suggest a heartening cash transfer.

It goes without saying that, even though Stowe claimed that their expensive shared quarters were being used for "undercover" police work (and you can say that again), Soulsby knew nothing of what his closest buddy was up to. In fact, his loudly professed and believable ignorance is all you need to know about him. (That, and the fact that he enjoyed the full confidence of the mayor.) Crime was not the sort of thing to arouse Soulsby's curiosity—or the curiosity of his department, come to that. And if extortion or embezzlement *did* count as crimes around here, then it's hard to guess where it would all end. In the Fourth District of the city, by contrast, six women have turned up dead in the past year, and the residents of the Petworth neighborhood are scared that a serial killer is on the loose. Relax, said a police spokesman at a public meeting. The deceased ladies were "crack whores." Contempt.

Soulsby had to go, of course. Incredibly, this "chief" resigned at Thanksgiving without any explanation, let alone any apology, and his departure was mourned by Mayor Barry, who described him as "one of the best crime-fighting chiefs this city has had in a long time." Breathtakingly, this "chief" remained on the payroll, at an enhanced salary of $110,000 a year, while the languid search for a biddable replacement went on. "The culture of impunity" is the name given to this by D.C. reform activist Sam Smith. Any city can have its scandals—hard though it is to think of another serious world capital that has endured so many—but only in D.C. do those responsible have a near guarantee that their offenses will be cost-free, at least to themselves.

I sometimes have difficulty getting people from out of town to believe me. The mayor, as a former convict, is barely eligible to join the police department whose crimes, and whose criminals, he protects. Yet this fact doesn't embarrass him when he swells the cry to restore capital punishment in the District, or supports mandatory sentencing for minor drug offenses, or speaks up for prayer in the schools. (When he's not doing that, or posing with iffy rednecks, he's accepting the endorsement of Louis Farrakhan or touring the more dilapidated wards wearing a dashiki that emphatically doesn't suit him. Contempt.) When he ran for mayor in 1994, Barry gave out a 20-point flyer at the Lorton penitentiary and the D.C. Jail, making extravagant promises to inmates and their families. He would, he said, ask for legislation giving himself the power to pardon offenders. He would also call for the repeal of a D.C. City Council measure that required violent criminals to serve at least 85 percent of their sentences before becoming eligible for parole. The organizer of Barry's surreal "get out the con and ex-con vote" drive was one CONTINUED ON PAGE 125

STEPHEN JAFFE



Nia Peeples wears *Ray-Ban* Rituals™ Rectangle in black. Steve Winwood wears *Ray-Ban* SideStreet™ '98 Square in black.

Shades of Blue

Style hits a high note this season with the February release of Universal Studios' *Blues Brothers 2000*™, starring Hollywood's favorite fashion accessory, *Ray-Ban*® sunglasses. As in the 1980 original film, darkened shades and soulful riffs make beautiful music together. Here, *Brothers*' actress Nia Peeples and legendary R&B man Steve Winwood form a dynamic duo — but, looking this sharp, they're singing anything but the blues.



Actress/singer/writer Nia Peeples shows shades of amazing versatility. She recently made her directorial debut with the short film, *Treading Water* and has written a TV pilot, *Educating Annie*. With dozens of movie and television credits (including a starring role in the new NBC series, *Odd Jobs*), Nia isn't easily categorized. She's an original — just like the *Ray-Ban* sunglasses she sports here.

Right: Nia belts out a blue note wearing *Ray-Ban* Rituals™ Round in black.



If anyone can stop Traffic with his soulful sound, it's Steve Winwood. Renowned among musicians and beloved by fans, Steve will soon celebrate 20 years of solo orchestrations. His latest release, *Junction Seven*, blends contemporary grooves and classic rock rhythms in perfect harmony. Is Steve more Chicago blues than UK pop? Smoky cool in *Ray-Bans*, Steve strikes us as a blues man, through and through.

Right: Steve fine-tu style in *Ray-Ban* Out Rectangle in t *Junction Seven* is ava on Virgin Recor



The eyes have it: Nia gazes behind *Ray-Ban* Rituals. Soft Rectangle Metal in black; Steve looks sharp wearing *Ray-Ban* Outsiders. Rectangle in black.

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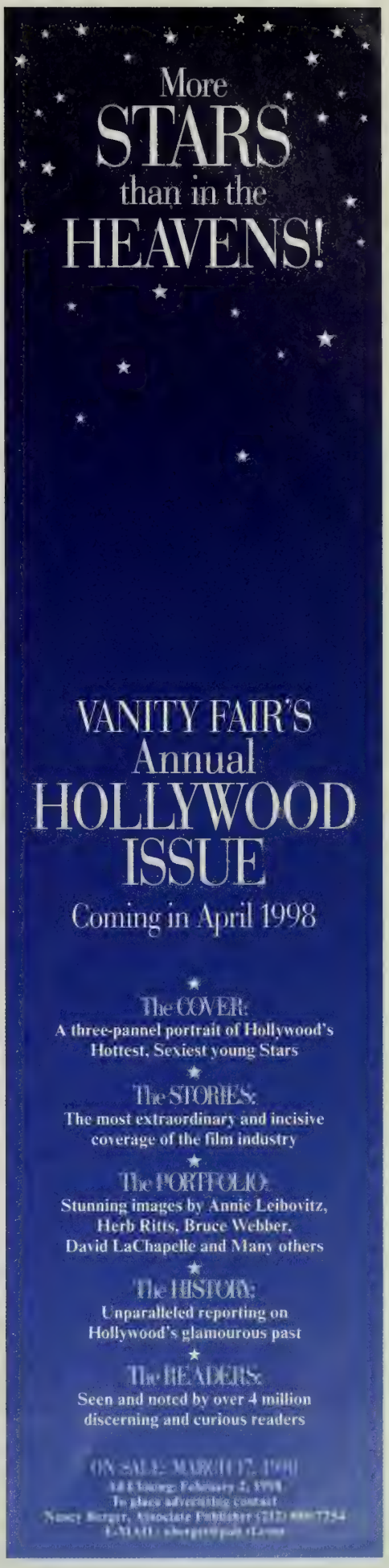
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 120 Rhozier "Roach" Brown, a convicted killer and a mayoral aide. I am not making this up.

But suppose you actually did care about improving the chances and conditions for inmates? You would be straight out of luck under this regime. A year or so after Barry's bizarre re-election, senior U.S. district judge William B. Bryant seized control of medical and mental-health services at the D.C. Jail, saying that Washington's prison officials didn't "give a damn" for the people under their supervision. The appointment of yet another receiver followed—among many other atrocities—the death in custody of Richard C. Johnson, an AIDS patient who became incontinent and was left lashed by a urine-soaked sheet to his prison wheelchair. In a special unit for difficult prisoners, inmates were being held in cells without lightbulbs or working toilets or bedding, and in the absence of eating utensils used dirty playing cards to scoop their gruesome rations. City officials, said Judge Bryant, had no intention of cleaning up the foul and dangerous conditions. They "sign a consent order and walk out of the courtroom," he said of the jail warden and the "Corrections" officials, "and nothing happens." Contempt.

So that's another route to the morgue. And, incidentally, there it is again. That key phrase. *Nothing happens.* Nothing. In December there was an election to fill a seat on the D.C. council, and 7 percent of voters turned out. During the 1996 presidential contest, it was seriously proposed that the D.C. primary be canceled for lack of interest, and also because a cancellation of the election might save money. The second reason was, if possible, even more grotesque than the first: a few months later it was discovered that Barry's regime had failed to allocate or even to identify a whole $89 million in federal grants to combat AIDS, TB, and mounting infant mortality. Incompetence at this level is the equivalent of corruption: the express desire to keep things small-time and within the dirty fist of cronyism and graft. And the very pulse of local democratic life has begun to ebb toward nil. Civic life, too. After the District virtually abolished the appeals procedure for parking tickets, and began issuing them like confetti as a revenue-enhancer, citizens retaliated by disabling half the parking meters in D.C. and cutting the revenue by 75 percent. The contempt is mutual.

Other shortcuts to the mortuary? The fire department is unable to take on more than one big fire at a time, and on most days keeps a third of its trucks out of service because of maintenance or budgetary nightmares. Before Congress seized control of the city in 1997, eight fire stations were closed, and only one of the 16 big ladder trucks was in operation. (Of the 15 that were laid up, one was the truck supposedly on call for emergencies at the White House.) To dial the emergency ambulance service is to take your life into your own hands; callers can be put on hold if they get through at all. In a very special and personal way, Mayor Barry underlined this sense of pervasive insecurity and decline when he threatened to withdraw police patrols from the wards which voted against him on the City Council. (This threat, made on the record and in public, was the perfect demonstration of Barry's bullying banana-republic style. It backfired, though. For one thing, as people in my ward could be heard asking, how would they know whether or not the threat had been carried out?)

My ward, as it happens, is largely white. I have also lived in majority-black wards of D.C. where there is even less service and protection than where I live now. But there is no way around the unspoken element in this appalling murder of the soul of a city, and now may be the time to speak about it. Barry openly tells his low-income and city-job client-voters that only he stands between them and the revenge of Whitey. So grim is Washington's history as a colony, and as a dependency of a Dixiecrat Congress, that many people are still tongue-tied in the face of this style of cynical propaganda. Like poor whites in Alabama a generation ago, poor blacks in Washington today are assumed to accept rot and misery and sordid private enrichment if it comes from "one of their own." That's how much he cares about them. So, even though pointing this out is in some way demeaning, it does deserve to be said that Barry's bravest opponents and critics—shaming some of the coughing and shuffling white liberals—are black also. The columnist Colbert King of *The Washington Post* and public-safety activist Carl Rowan Jr. have been to the fore in unmasking scandal and racketeering, as have tough young writers of all "shades" from the excellent local *City Paper*. A strong recall initiative has been started by a group of black women in the mayor's own home turf of Ward Eight. Judge Bryant, last-ditch rescuer



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of the abused prison population, is black. And, in the continuing exodus of citizens from the city to the suburbs, it has become impossible to employ the old euphemism "white flight." The District of Columbia is losing about 10,000 people a year to migration, most of them taking their own thrift and solvency with them, and the best estimate of demographers and census takers is that 83 percent of these are black.

It is not as if Washington were some hopeless, stricken conurbation like Mexico City. There are only 340,301 registered voters here, for example. We are not overcrowded. The housing stock is not bad and, even in some low-income areas, is actually pretty sound. There is no pollution, because government is practically the only industry. Millions of paying visitors come every year to see the great galleries and monuments of America (which are, thanks to the fact that they fall under the care of the despised federal government, still standing). The Metrorail subway system, which by the way is also largely black-operated, is clean and swift and safe. But according to the Children's Defense Fund, one in three children lives in dire need, and a baby born in the District is less likely to celebrate a first birthday (the true test of infant mortality) than its counterpart in Jamaica or Sri Lanka. About 70,000 residents, or say one in eight, are in jail, or on probation, or on parole, or under arrest, or subject to an arrest warrant. (That's three times the rate for Louisiana, which is the next worst, and it's almost half the African-American males in our nation's capital.)

There's a general impression that things have begun to mend since Congress ended home rule and annexed the running of the city. But take one macro example and one micro one. Last fall's three-week delay in the opening of the city's decrepit schools was the first visible consequence of the appointment of a retired veteran, General Julius Becton, to run the system in a no-nonsense fashion. And the old habits of mediocre guilt-tripping remained unaltered. "Our school had completed repairs on schedule," I was told by a friend who sends his children to the public schools on principle. "But we were kept shut because it's a majority-white school and opening it would be tantamount to discrimination!" Think of what a huge reservoir of civic despair is backed up behind that statement.

As for the micro, in May of 1997, Marion Barry was by the might of Congress, by the Congress-appointed financial-control board, and by the D.C. City Council ordered to reduce the size of his exorbitant "security" detail from 31 full-time police officers to 15. Chief Soulsby promised publicly to make the cut by October 1. In early December it emerged that the deadline had passed with 26 officers still protecting the mayor's person. It will not, perhaps, surprise you to learn that this unit had put in for $178,000 in overtime pay during the period when it was under orders to downsize itself. One especially protective cop had stood guard over the mayor for a dedicated 845 overtime hours in the first 10 months of 1997, and amassed more than $23,000 for his solicitude. Ten cops claimed 132 hours of overtime during a week in July when they were in Washington and Barry was in Africa. (On a later tour, he gave the Nigerian military dictatorship just what it deserved—the prestige and credibility of a Marion Barry official visit.) Finally agreeing to answer a question about the overtime, Barry flat out ignored the request to reduce his retinue and said, "What's the big deal?" Contempt.

The scandal, remarked my friend Michael Kinsley about the visible, political, aboveground, big-time Capitol-and-Beltway Washington, is not what's illegal. The scandal is what's *legal.* Much the same goes for the run-down small town that makes up the city itself. Americans, we increasingly hear, believe in small towns. They love, or think they love, the small-town ethos of Hope, Arkansas, and other winking little hamlets. Both Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich have sworn to make a special project of poor orphaned Washington, and turn it into (why must they always say this of a patch of swampland with no high ground of any kind?) "a shining city on a hill." They end up posing with a grinning Barry at some stricken school or church of uplift, and move on to more immediately rewarding small-town matters.

The sums of waste and defalcation I cite above may seem relatively minor, but they are pretty hefty for a city of about half a million people. John Kennedy once said of the District of Columbia that it had all the charm and courtesy of a northern city and all the efficiency of a southern one. In the same way, D.C. today has all the vices of a small town and none of the virtues. It is a political slum. But it proves the untruth of that complacent saying (beloved of all ward heelers and party crooks) about all politics' being local. It is the nation's capital, and therefore the nation's disgrace. □

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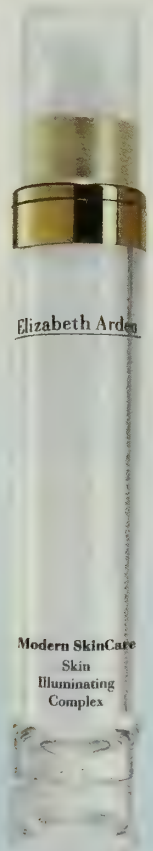
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LA BOHÈME

An unconventional woman with a searing talent, Berenice Abbott documented a changing 1930s New York in 125 photographs on view this month



Man Ray's 1922 portrait of his 23-year-old darkroom assistant, Berenice Abbott, which he shot for *Vanity Fair*.

She surveyed the city with a cartographer's eye. Her lean, muscular images document the shifting silhouette of New York pushing out of the 19th century and into the 20th—the rising skyscraper, the steel span of a bridge, the hardware store whose stock spills out onto the sidewalk. "To photograph New York City means to seek to catch in the sensitive and delicate photographic emulsion the spirit of the metropolis, while remaining true to its essential fact, its hurrying tempo, its congested streets, the past jostling the present," wrote Berenice Abbott in a 1935 grant proposal to the Federal Art Project. And what had already been six years in the making became Official Project No. 265-6900-826: the more than 300 photographs known as "Changing New York," an exhibition featuring 125 images from the collection of the City of New York, celebrating both Abbott's centennial year and the museum's 75th anniversary, and the complete project has been reproduced in the recently published *Berenice Abbott: Changing New York* (New Press).

Abbott left Springfield, Ohio, for the Bohemia of Greenwich Village in 1918, rooming with Djuna Barnes. In 1921 she bought a one-way ticket to Paris, where she took a position as Man Ray's darkroom assistant (she qualified for the job because he wanted to hire someone who knew nothing about photography); she's also credited with having taught him how to dance. It was in Paris that she began taking the blazingly iconographic photographs that are the defining images of the writers and artists of her day—James Joyce, Jean Cocteau, Sylvia Beach. Abbott's 1928 portrait of James Joyce simply *is* James Joyce. Her 1927 photograph of Eugène Atget is the only known portrait of the French photographer, and Abbott is almost singlehandedly responsible for bringing Atget's work to public attention.

"A master-artist who is an inventor, too . . . a woman who is as practical as Ben Franklin," wrote poet Muriel Rukeyser of Abbott. Abbott's infrequently seen science photographs of the 1950s are stunning images of the unobservable, illustrating science as it had never been seen before—wave forms, magnetism, the transformation of energy. She invented and patented the Abbott Distorter and other photography-related technology through her own company, the House of Photography. In addition she wrote several successful how-to books, and in 1935 founded the photography program at New York's New School for Social Research, where she taught for 23 years.

"The tempo of the metropolis is not of eternity, or even time, but of the vanishing instant," she once wrote. A pioneer, a visual historian, a woman passionate about capturing the truth of her subject, unadorned—Berenice Abbott has given us the past, and in it we find our future. —A. M. HOMES



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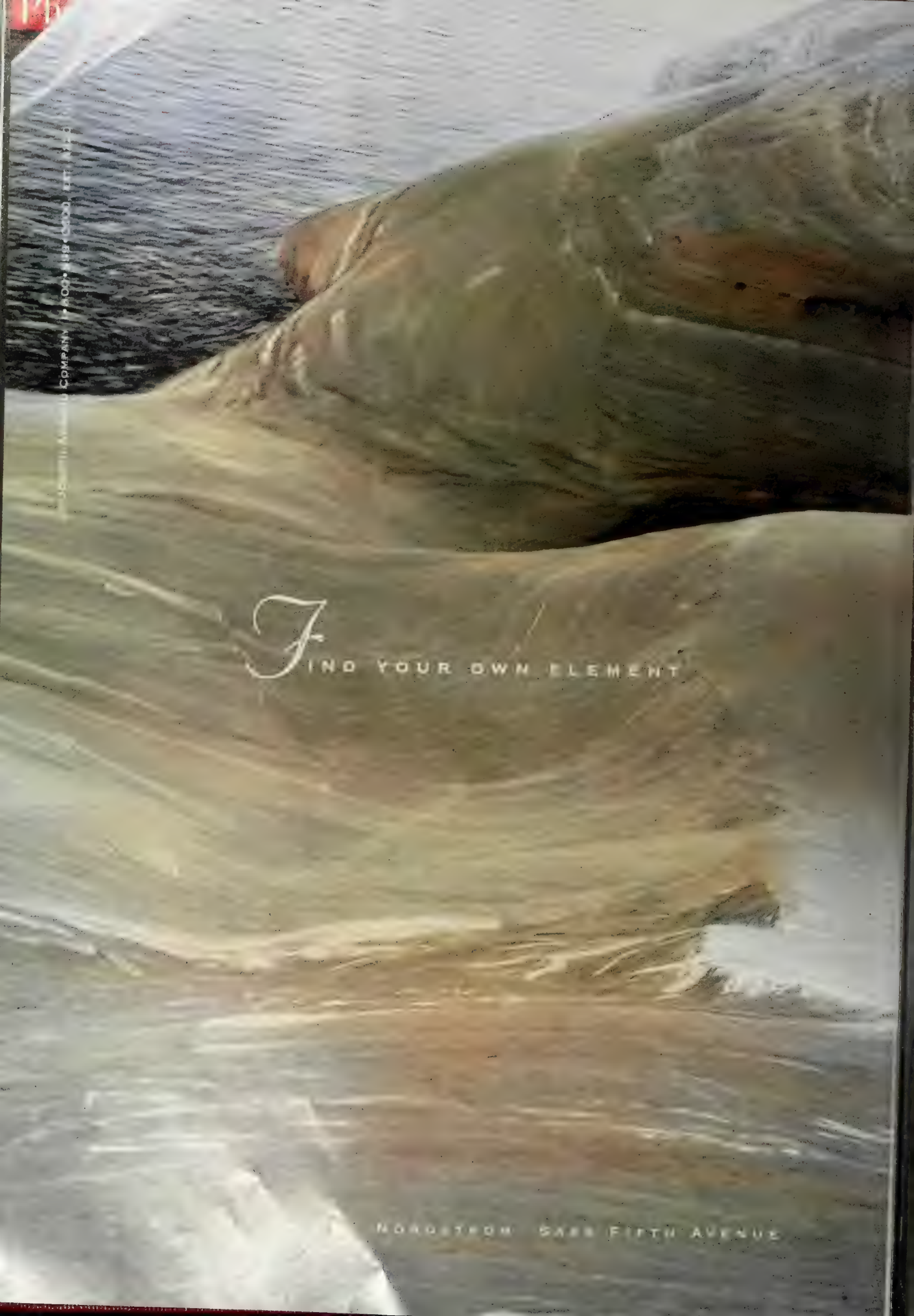
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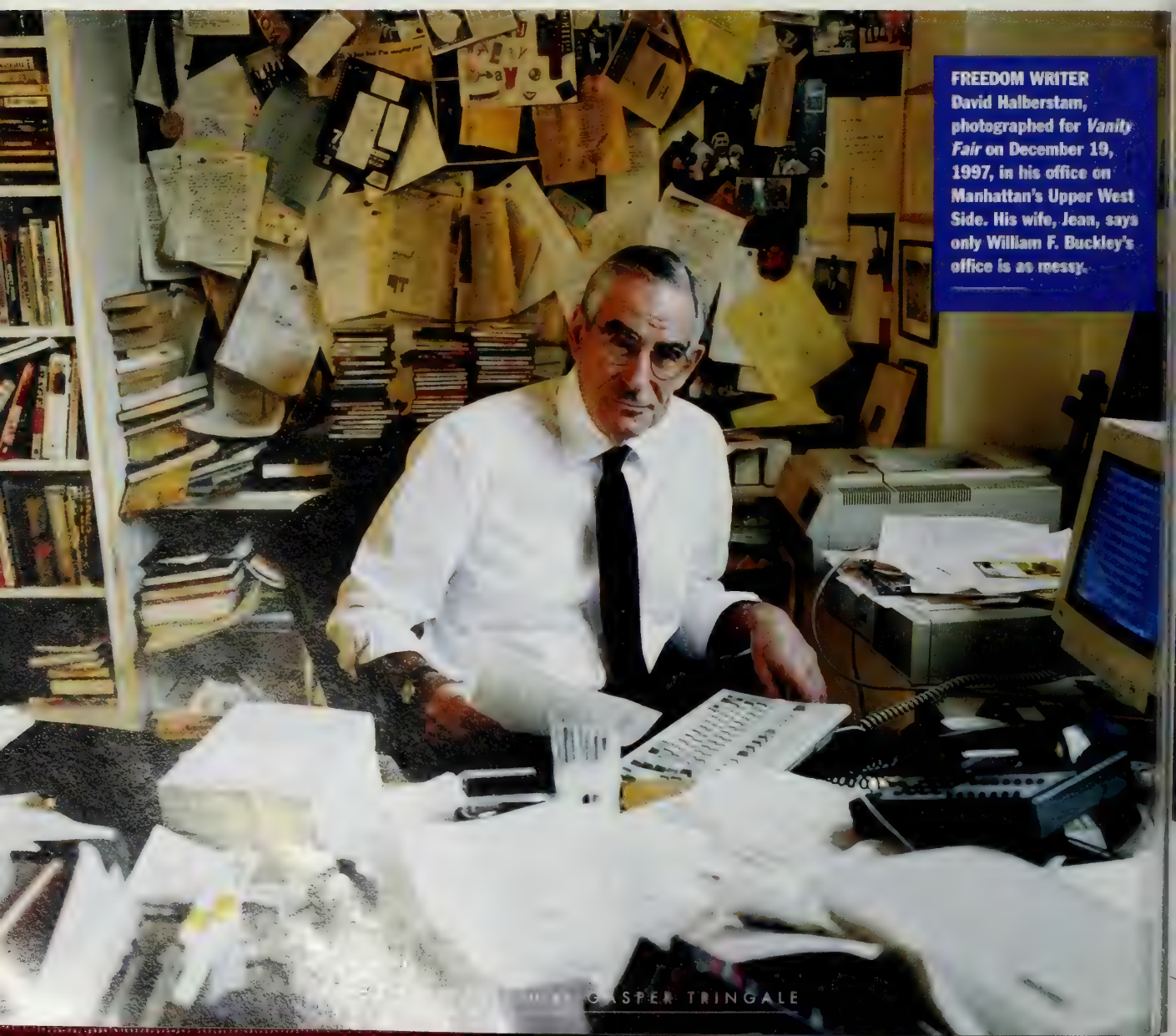
After a Pulitzer and a shelf of best-sellers, David Halberstam has gone back to his first, perhaps best story for his next big book: the young heroes of America's civil-rights crusade

BY DAVID MARGOLICK

It was the spring of 1985, and 25 years had passed since a group of polite young black men and women faced jeering mobs, hostile policemen, a resentful business community, craven officialdom, and centuries of entrenched southern racism in order to integrate the lunch counters of Nashville, Tennessee. Gathering to mark the anniversary, the onetime protesters, now middle-aged, invited someone who, while technically not one of them, had been a crucial part of their crusade. He was David Halberstam, who had, as a young reporter for *The Nashville Tennessean,* chronicled those epochal days.

Halberstam had long since become one of America's most prominent journalists. He'd covered wars in the Congo and Vietnam for *The New York Times,* won a Pulitzer Prize, and written several important books, including *The Best and the Brightest* and *The Powers That Be.* But when he returned to Nashville he came to realize that it was perhaps his best story: where the first mass sit-ins and arrests of the civil-rights era had occurred; where the Gandhian culture of nonviolent protest took root most deeply; where a whole new generation of black leaders had been spawned.

"I was just enormously moved," Hal-



FREEDOM WRITER David Halberstam, photographed for *Vanity Fair* on December 19, 1997, in his office on Manhattan's Upper West Side. His wife, Jean, says only William F. Buckley's office is as messy.

JASPER TRINGALE

berstam said of the return visit. "What I felt was a sense of change in the city, much of it good, a sense that in this little group, at least, we had gotten somewhat beyond black and white, that something had worked. It was an important part of my life that I hadn't talked about or written about, and suddenly it was beginning to come out of the closet."

Indeed, as far afield as Halberstam the historian had foraged for book topics—America's press empires in *The Powers That Be,* the American and Japanese auto industries in *The Reckoning*—he came to see that he had a great book in his own background. It is the story Halberstam tells in his latest book, *The Children,* to be published this month by Random House.

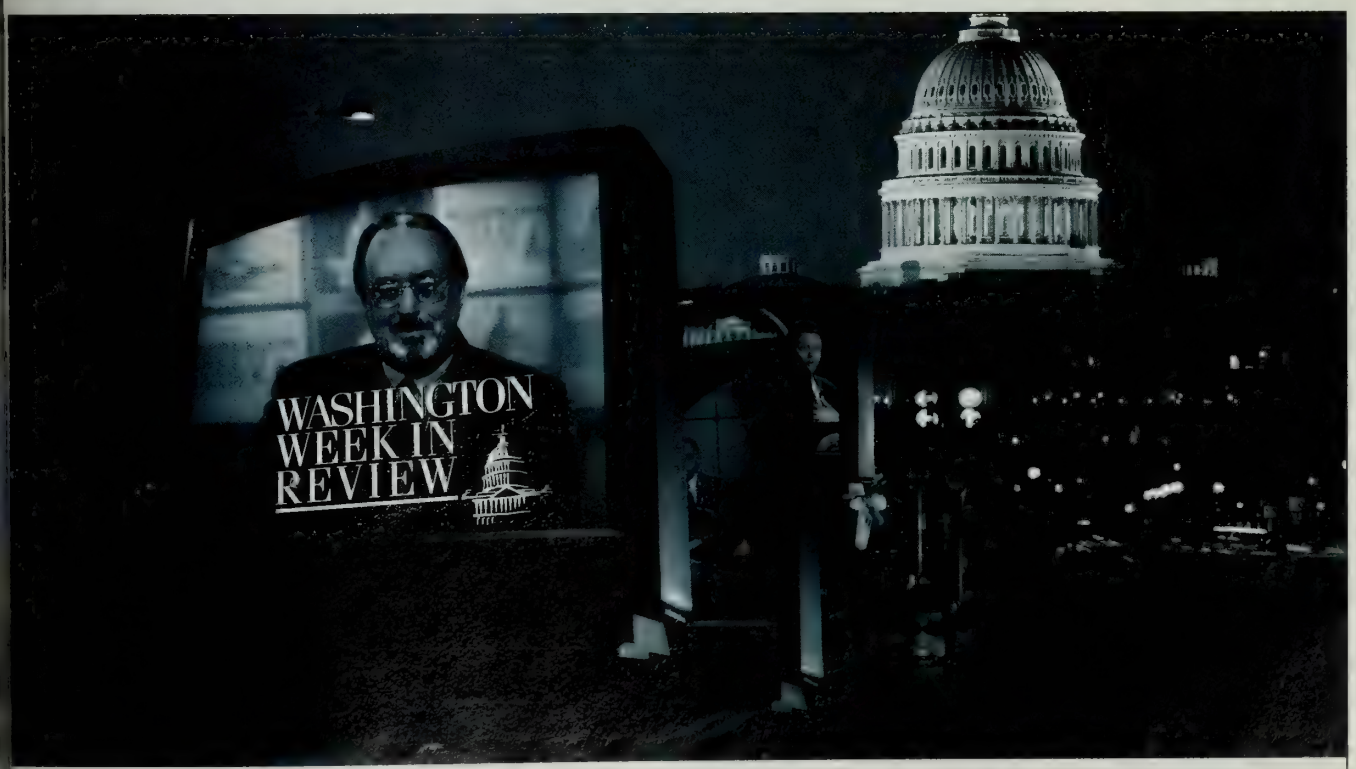
To Halberstam, the book fills a hole in civil-rights historiography, which has focused more on the mountaintop than on the grass roots. "Most of the books about that period tend to be about Martin Luther King, who is self-evidently a great man, a great leader," he said, sitting by the cappuccino-maker in the kitchen of his apartment on Manhattan's Upper West Side. "But it's a little bit like writing about World War II and only writing about Dwight Eisenhower or Winston Churchill."

Working on the book also filled a gap in Halberstam's understanding of the men and women he'd covered and come to know. He'd forsaken Nashville and the civil-rights movement in late 1960 for *The New York Times* and Africa and Southeast Asia. But these foot soldiers went on to become battalion leaders and company commanders as the civil-rights movement moved from Nashville to the Deep South. As Freedom Riders and marchers from Selma to Montgomery, they led protests that prompted a chastened nation to enact the landmark civil-rights legislation of the mid-1960s.

"These days there's all too much coverage of pseudo-events about extraordinarily inauthentic people doing inauthentic things," he said. "What I wanted to do here was to recall this remarkable moment when a group of seemingly ordinary young people, acting largely upon their religious faith, again and again risked their lives over a five-year period to dramatically change this country."

Listen to the people who walked that historic walk and they'll tell you that Halberstam, then 25 years old, was really one of them. By marching alongside them rather than watching them from across the street, and by telling their story straight when they were too embattled to tell it themselves, he became a vital part of their cause. "He was an intense, compassionate, empathetic young reporter," said Dr. Rodney Powell, one of those profiled in the book. "All of us began to trust David. We shared our thoughts, our feelings, our strategies with him, and this helped him gain real insight into what the movement was about and what motivated us."

He did so at considerable danger to himself. "To be white with a pencil and a pad in the South in those days was very dangerous," said John Lewis, another protest leader, now a congressman from Atlanta. "The people who attacked us didn't want the story to get out. If it hadn't been for David Halberstam, the movement in Nashville would have been like a bird without wings." (Mr. Lewis is not the only public official to emerge from the protests; another former marcher portrayed in the book is the embattled mayor of Washington, D.C., Marion Barry. "He was this rather sweet, charming young man—a bit of



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a clotheshorse," Halberstam recalled.)

Now 63, Halberstam still seems entirely too youthful to have bronze plaques commemorating events he once covered. He is already working on his next book (about the Chicago Bulls and Michael Jordan) and is contemplating several more. "I'd like to do what I'm doing for at least another 10 or 12 more years," he said. Yet he has grown old enough to start taking stock of a career forged from what he called "shrewd choices, good luck, good instincts, and a very good era."

In 1955, when Halberstam contemplated life after serving as managing editor of *The Harvard Crimson,* the traditional options were clear: to be a gofer at a prestigious daily newspaper or take a fancy fellowship abroad. He saw another route. The impact of *Brown* v. *Board of Education,* the 1954 Supreme Court ruling outlawing segregated schools, was about to convulse the South. Not only was this where the news would be, it was where Halberstam, a tall, scrawny kid unsure of himself and his journalistic talents, could pick up what he felt he lacked: tenacity, a knack for people, and, most of all, courage. "It was very important to me to learn physical courage, and covering the South, particularly if you were Jewish, was always a little edgier, because everybody knew that it was 'the niggers and the Jews' who were doing all this awful stuff," he said.

Halberstam loaded up his 1946 Chevy with most of his possessions—a single suitcase of clothes, a primitive hi-fi, an LP of Louis Armstrong doing W. C. Handy—and headed to Mississippi. He began in West Point, population 8,000, reporting by day for the *Daily Times Leader,* reading Gunnar Myrdal's classic 1944 study of race relations, *An American Dilemma,* by night. Within 10 months he'd been fired, in part for pursuing stories about integration, one of which involved a young man named Medgar Evers, who was then the NAACP's field secretary in Mississippi. A friend then got him the job on the *Tennessean.* To Halberstam and people like him, it was a beacon of liberalism in the Jim Crow South. To its detractors, angry that it had resolved to [illegible] light the nascent civil-rights mo[illegible]

rather than bury it on its inside pages, it was simply "the nigger-lover paper."

With a great newspaper behind him, Halberstam found what he was looking for. "When I was on my own, I was a world-class coward," he said. "But when I represented *The Nashville Tennessean* I was absolutely fearless." His courage was fortified by some of the stories he covered, such as the 1960 campaign of Estes Kefauver, the state's senior senator, who all but forced those who loathed him for supporting civil rights to look him in the eye and shake his hand. (He won anyway.) "It's one of the great things I ever saw as a young man," Halberstam said.

> **"To be white with a pencil and a pad in the South in those days was very dangerous."**



AMONG FRIENDS
From left: publicists Mabel Crooks Bodie and Dr. William Crump, singer Marian Anderson, Halberstam, *Nashville Globe* editor M. W. Day, and *Nashville Banner* reporter Robert Churchwell, Nashville, 1957.

Halberstam had been in Nashville four years when, in February 1960, the protesters left their universities and churches and descended upon the segregated lunch counters at Woolworth's and other dime stores. When they were torn off the stools by angry whites who ground out their cigarettes in their hair or poured hot coffee down their backs, Halberstam was there, taking it all down.

"A sympathetic referee" is how John Lewis described him. "A friendly shadow," said Bernard LaFayette, another marcher, now president of the American [illegible] College in Nashville. And by ducking the same bricks, giving them wise counsel, and occasionally even offering them protection—Curtis Murphy, now an assistant high-school principal in Chicago, recalled the time Halberstam shielded a young white protester as she fled her attackers—he became one of them.

"We told him that he should be included in the book, that he's one of the most important people," said Dr. Gloria Johnson-Powell, now a professor of child psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. "He was not a bystander in any way, although he will not acknowledge that." (That, incidentally, was how the competition viewed things, too. "If we wanted to know where the next sit-in was going to be, we would just call David," said Larry Brinton of the *Nashville Banner,* whose paper all but banned coverage of the protests.)

To Halberstam the experience proved how constructive journalism could be, or once was. The articles he later wrote in Vietnam for *The New York Times* may have outraged President Kennedy, but rarely could he feel their impact; he was too far away. In Nashville he felt it every day, as the community simultaneously teetered on the brink of chaos and evolved.

Will Campbell, who was in Nashville at the time with the National Council of Churches, said that what surprised him most about *The Children* was its religious undertone. It shouldn't have, he said, because Halberstam once told him he comes from a long line of rabbis.

Unlike many of the Christian clergymen in Nashville then, he said, Halberstam "saw this whole movement as a theological movement and not as a secular, legalistic movement. There's not the fire in his eyes as there would be with a Jeremiah or an Amos, but in a journalistic fashion, he's saying that the children are saying 'thus saith the Lord.'"

Karl Fleming, who witnessed much of what Halberstam did while covering the civil-rights movement for *Newsweek,* called *The Children* Halberstam's finest work. "He was highly offended by the Vietnam War, but I think this is really where his heart is, and was," he said. "These are the events that shaped our early lives; these are the things that made us as reporters and as human beings. There's more humanity in this book than in anything he's done." □

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GUCCI'S ALL-AMERICAN Tom Ford, 36, with model Astrid Muñoz, in Palm Springs, December 1997.

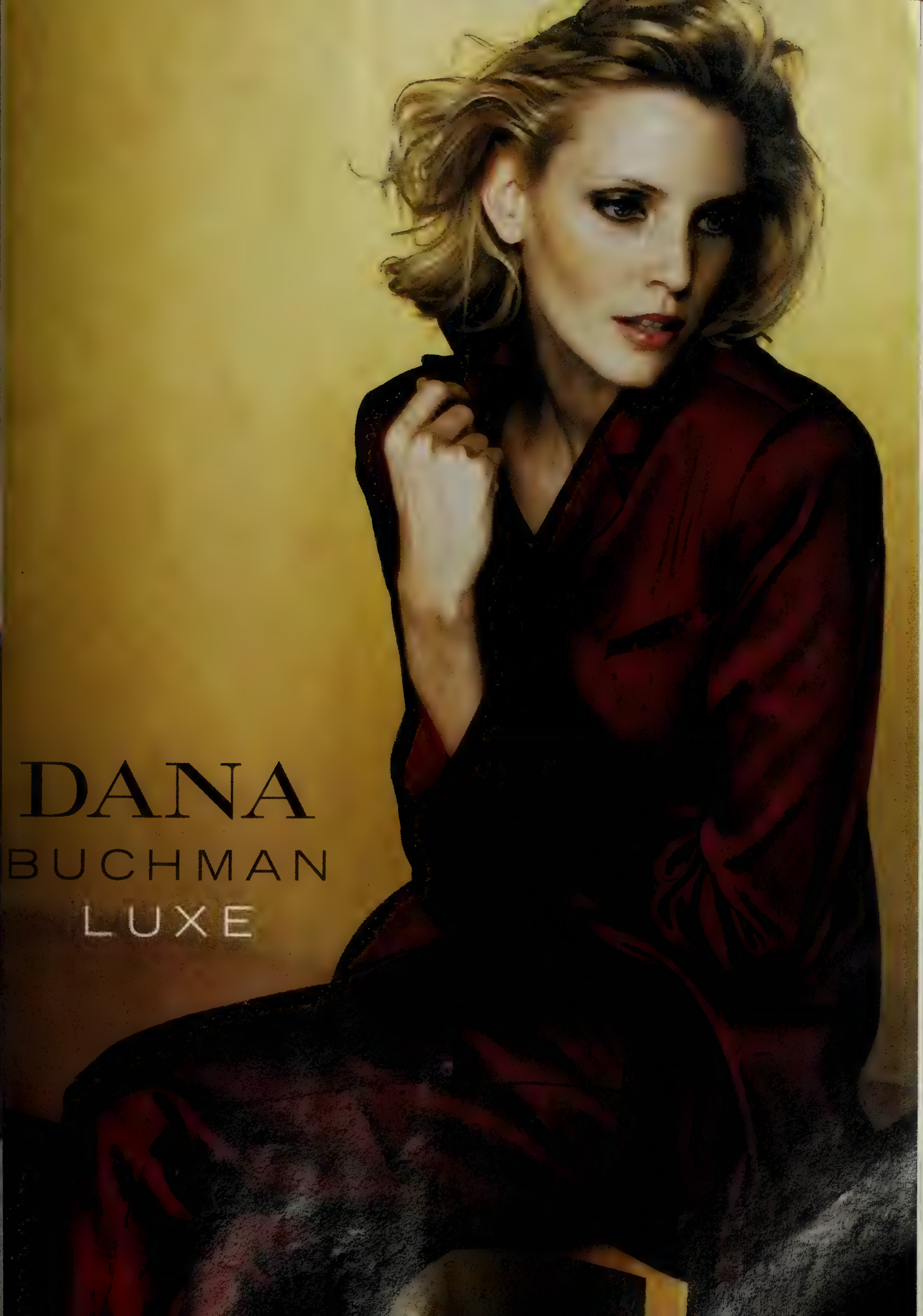
With the looks of a matinee idol, the determination of a Panzer commander, and the pop-culture antennae of a teenager, Tom Ford has turned a tired Italian leather-goods firm into a $1 billion international fashion force. Right now, Gucci is cooler than cool

BY MICHAEL SHNAYERSON

THE FORD THAT DRIVES GUCCI

Tom Ford wants you in black. Gucci black. Though if you must have a little pink jacket and skirt, he might compromise here and there. A [illegible] what you wear from head to toe, sunglasses to shoes, i[illegible] Worldwide domination, country to country, is [illegible] And when Tom Ford sets his mind to a plan, [illegible] what he wants.

Ford is in black himself as he slides into a banquette at New York's Cafe Luxembourg for lunch: a black large-collared shirt, black tapered pants, black square-toed shoes, black denim jacket. "Full Gucc," as the latest slang has it. He has the strong-jawed looks of a matinee idol, as all-American as his name, which CONTINUED ON PAGE 141


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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 136 in a business of image and beauty hasn't hurt. For a designer, he's also unusually well spoken and focused. But these aren't the only ways Ford has distinguished himself from the pack.

In just three years, Ford has transformed a moribund Italian leather-goods company into the hottest name in international fashion. His forays into hard-edged glamour have produced clothes that seem as supercilious as they are sexy: metallic-black jackets and hip-hugging pants, patent-leather-strap evening dresses with gold *G* logos, micro-minis, and killer stiletto heels that dazzle fashion editors at the shows and fly off the racks at Gucci's more than 150 stores around the world. Miuccia Prada, Helmut Lang, Jean Paul Gaultier, and Jil Sander, among others, have also produced clothes that are edgy and hot, but nobody in fashion can report a turnaround story as spectacular as Gucci's: from $250 million in gross annual sales amid the specter of bankruptcy to its current status as the envy of the industry, with sales of $1 billion. In achieving this, Gucci has done more than set fashion trends. Its brilliant success in going public has inspired many of its rivals to do the same. And the sight of a young American shaking the dust from a venerable European house has caused an almost madcap scramble for other Americans or Brits to revamp other European companies. Under L.V.M.H. Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton's wide umbrella alone, the Americans are Marc Jacobs at Vuitton, Michael Kors at Celine, and Narciso Rodriguez at Loewe; among the Brits are Alexander McQueen at Givenchy, and John Galliano at Christian Dior. Not every American product, however, is a Ford.

As a breed, designers publicly shudder at the mention of commerce, and tend to rely on a business partner for running the company. Gucci has 54-year-old Domenico De Sole as its shrewd C.E.O., but Ford has immersed himself in the business as well. A self-professed control freak, he's closely involved in the designs for all of Gucci's 11 merchandise lines, from handbags to home décor, some 5,000 products in all. He plans the ad campaigns, redecorates older stores, and designs new ones down to the shade of paint for the walls. "He has a real sense of what modern marketing is about," says Suzy Menkes of the *International Herald Tribune,* the reigning doyenne of fashion critics. "He understands that image is as much about how you handle the media, what you have in the windows, and what your videos are as about the clothes." Like Warhol, who was an early influence, Ford has a cunning grasp of pop culture and how to use it; at the center of the fashion world, he's also an outsider looking in, musing on what a designer is and can be.

Along the way, Ford has become an icon himself. Lionized at fashion shows, he's now a hit in Hollywood, where Madonna, Uma Thurman, Gwyneth Paltrow, Goldie Hawn, Toni Braxton, and Rita Wilson, among others, have discovered that the designer is as cool as his clothes. Last summer, Wilson, the actress and wife of Tom Hanks, was among those who helped Ford pull together a glittering evening that raised $1.2 million for AIDS Project Los Angeles with a Gucci fashion show, dinner, and dancing for more than a thousand; Ford, a onetime actor in television commercials, got a standing ovation from the star-studded crowd. "He's like the sexiest gay man alive," Wilson exclaims. "If he were a movie star he could be openly gay because you'd still want to see him kissing women. He's that sexy."

"To gay men Tom's a dream. Straight men admire him. Then, with women, forget it."

"I don't know anyone who is actually so many different things positively to different people," says Lisa Eisner, a Hollywood socialite and fashion muse who has become a close friend. "To gay men he's a dream. Straight men admire him as a businessman. Then, with women, forget it. There are hardly any women who don't wish he was straight, because he's so charming. He has an inherent natural glamour, an old-fashioned, movie-star thing.

"Also," she says, "he smells good all the time."

In his role as Gucci's global overseer, Ford travels constantly. "I've never met a man on a jet more often," says *Women's Wear Daily*'s editorial director, Patrick McCarthy. Ford's week leading up to our lunch, he reports dutifully, began in L.A., where Gucci is building a new store from the ground up on Rodeo Drive, and where Ford just bought a Richard Neutra house in Bel Air. He flew back to Paris, where he does much of his designing, and where he keeps an apartment with his companion, journalist Richard Buckley, European editor at Condé Nast's *House & Garden.* He flew to Florence, where Gucci is now based, then to Milan, where much of its business is still done. He flew to London, where a new Gucci store on Sloane Street was nearing completion, and where he and Buckley have another house. Then back to Paris one night for dinner. Then to L.A. again, and now to New York.

But Ford looks chipper, and ready for his role that evening as a presenter and nominee at the VH1 fashion awards. For the first awards ceremony, three years ago, says John Sykes, president of VH1, it was hard to get Seventh Avenue to support the idea of putting fashion into a new arena. "Tom was one of the first to appreciate the power of television for fashion. He pulled me aside at the first one and said, 'No matter what the critics say, after tonight, keep this going—it's going to change the fashion business forever.'"

After winning three VH1 awards in two years, Ford knows his chances are nil this time. No matter: beaming the images of Gucci clothes and their suave creator to four million viewers is what counts. Yet the prospect of not winning has at least symbolic import. Having expended his 15 minutes of triumph as fashion's newest darling, Ford knows he and Gucci have to get on to the next stage of less brilliant but more sustained growth, from conjuring up the shoe or handbag of the season to building a full wardrobe brand.

In Milan last October, Ford's spring 1998 women's collection began the transition. "I felt I had pushed Gucci as far in one direction as I could," he explains. "I couldn't have made the skirts any higher, I couldn't have made the heels any higher—people would have fallen over! But also it wouldn't have been Gucci anymore. In one sense I had to take the company that far in that direction to kill the old Gucci image. It really had to become fashion." The message this time, he says, was: Slow down. "People come to us wanting the next hype, the next trend. I

think we gave it to them, but the changes were subtler." It was, in a sense, self-preservation: not even a prodigy like Ford can reinvent fashion twice a year.

The reaction was largely favorable, but mixed. "I loved it," says *Vogue*'s Anna Wintour. "He's refining what he does, becoming more confident. It's getting stronger now because he's added everything you need: color, decoration . . ." "What he brought to the table this time was a softer Tom," says *Harper's Bazaar*'s Liz Tilberis. "It was still very focused, but a lot of silk jerseys. And that shock of pink in the middle of Tom's dark colors! Pink shantung coat, very stiff, battened fabric, and pink skirt. You could hear the gasps from editors who all instantly wanted it in their pages." But Suzy Menkes, an often tough critic of Ford's in the past, found the last collection "a mishmash," and adds, "There was a coat with a sequined lining that was really glam. The rest was rather vulgar. But

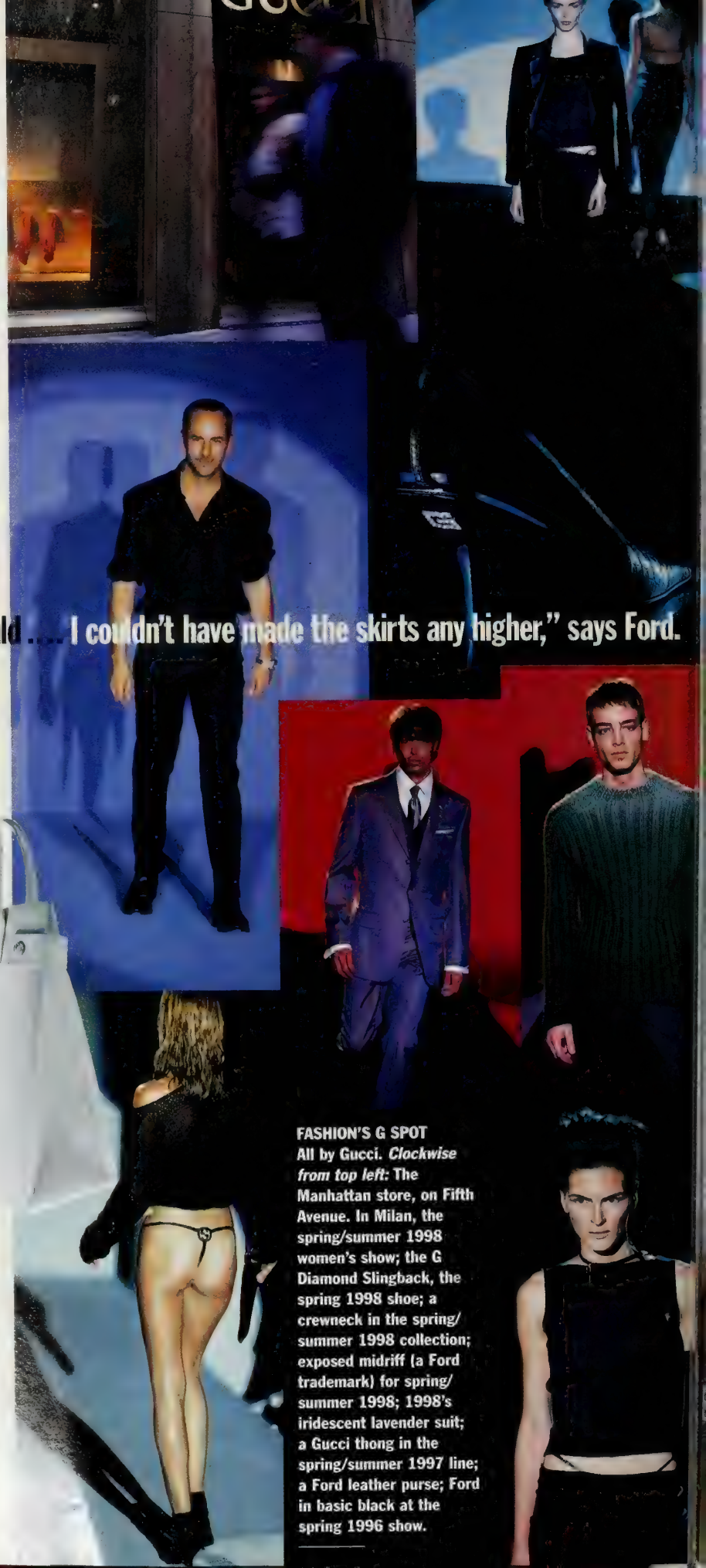
"I pushed Gucci as far as I could . . . I couldn't have made the skirts any higher," says Ford.

I'm sure when you see it in the [advertising] campaigns it will look great."

At the fashion awards Ford is proved right: no VH1 honors. Narciso Rodriguez, the former Calvin Klein protégé who made Carolyn Bessette Kennedy's wedding dress, is the new face this year. Fashion, so animated and defined by change, wants to move on. Somehow, even as Ford dials back Gucci from radical to restrained, he has to stay in front. "In the next six months," he says, "I have to find what's new."

Six weeks later, I wend my way through the narrow streets of the Sixth Arrondissement to an 18th-century building overlooking the Seine. Two floors up, Ford ushers me into a high-ceilinged apartment so devoid of color I feel I'm entering a three-dimensional photographic negative. Yapping at knee level is a terrier named John, undressed at the moment but often gussied up in outrageous drag for Polaroids that get sent to Tom's closest friends.

"I have this problem with colo[r]," Ford says, with a wave [of] within. "Partly it's tha[t] think about what to wear [in]



FASHION'S G SPOT
All by Gucci. *Clockwise from top left:* The Manhattan store, on Fifth Avenue. In Milan, the spring/summer 1998 women's show; the G Diamond Slingback, the spring 1998 shoe; a crewneck in the spring/summer 1998 collection; exposed midriff (a Ford trademark) for spring/summer 1998; 1998's iridescent lavender suit; a Gucci thong in the spring/summer 1997 line; a Ford leather purse; Ford in basic black at the spring 1996 show.


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up. It's like whatever your job is, you don't want to deal with more of it on your own time."

About as far as he's ventured is beige. The sofas in the living room, based on a Jean-Michel Frank design but sketched for production by Ford, are beige. So are the French travertine end tables. A German Arts and Crafts table by the window, with Miës van der Rohe chairs, follows the scheme; so do the 1920s French lamps. "The only color in the room," Ford says, "is the pink of this book here." He's referring to a book on architect Luis Barragán that lies under several others on a beige-and-black sideboard. A thin book, its pink spine showing. "If you're visually obsessive," he says, "everything has to be balanced. I just wanted one little touch of color." He shrugs off my quizzical look. "You can't describe why. It's not objective."

Ford likes to declare that he wears only black. Disbelieving, I make him show me the closet in his bedroom. Sure enough, every one of the suits and jackets is black. He opens a deep drawer below to reveal stacks of new black Gucci shirts—although he does wear the occasional white one. There's no white underwear, though. "I don't wear underwear," Ford says. "It's one extra layer; you look thinner without it."

Because Ford is a man who's in a different city every day, a lot has happened since our lunch. A new ad campaign, for one thing. Mario Testino, the photographer who set the standard for Gucci's early ad campaigns under Ford, has been succeeded by Luis Sanchis, though Testino's blithe, chic perversity will likely be maintained—since it's Ford who comes up with the ideas, chooses the models and hair and makeup people, looks through the viewfinder, and inspects the Polaroids. The image is key. "That's what goes out to the world. That's the final design."

The oil-slick gray paint of the study we're sitting in is the shade Ford chose for the Gucci store that just opened in London. The scent he's wearing is Gucci's new Envy for men. Then there's his watch: at Ford's urging, Gucci has just bought the Swiss licens[illegible] for 25 years. Though [illegible] Times didn't feel he had enough control over the product. The acquisition will add $190 million to Gucci's annual sales. And with the watch company comes its $18 million ad budget, which gets added to the $65 million Gucci will spend advertising its other goods. "It's crucial in terms of what the customer sees," Ford says happily. "Gucci, Gucci, Gucci."

But what of the New Thing? Ford says he's onto it, enough to have designed the fall 1998 men's collection and half of the women's line as well. Yet so far, by early December, its shape seems defined more by what it's not than by what it is. "We've been living off this retro period in fashion for the last three or four years," he observes. "Not only in fashion but architecture, music, movies . . . " Ford himself has been tagged a "retro" designer because so many of his clothes play off the last three decades: the 60s-style plastic go-go boots, the 70s-style velvet hipster jeans, the 80s-style padded-shoulder jackets. As a devotee of 70s style, he was without doubt the right man at the right place and time. A decade before, Karl Lagerfeld had seized on the Reagan-era return to tradition to reinvigorate Chanel. Ford was smart enough to see that Gucci's more ostentatious past—"part Riviera, part Hollywood kitsch," as he says—might perfectly suit the cynicism of the 90s. Cynicism, he likes to point out, is one of the main ingredients of fashion. "Someone who says, 'I know this is really awful, but I'm so cool I'm going to wear it anyway.'" Retro mocked the past, yet embraced it, with a *fin de siècle* irony that found perfect expression in Ford's revival of the Gucci logo, so gaudily displayed it came full circle to elegant.

"My career has been built on retro fashion because I've tried to do what every fashion designer tries to do, which is kind of feel what's in the air and turn it into a tangible product," Ford says. "But I can feel the retro thing is too mass now. *Boogie Nights, The Ice Storm.* Every bubble-gum commercial, they're sitting in Eames chairs and drinking out of 70s-style glasses."

What Ford has to do, he knows, is react faster to that than everyone else. "Everyone else will be sick of it, too," he says. "They may just have not figured it out yet because they don't scan as many magazines as I do. And by the time they're sick of it, the new thing has to be waiting there for them. And when they see it, they'll go, 'Wow, I didn't know that's what I wanted, but doesn't that look good to me!'"

Taking these cultural soundings is what fascinates Ford about design. He's not the sort of designer who, as he puts it, does a new line based on his life-changing trip to Bali. And while a couturier like John Galliano can supply the exquisite confections stars, models, and photographers need for fashion shoots, Ford designs for the racks; the discipline of the marketplace appeals to him. The trick is to follow his own instincts. "I read a story about [Vuitton's] Marc Jacobs not long ago," he says, "and one thing I noticed was that he seemed to be asking Vuitton, 'What should I do?' 'What should this be?' Which to me seemed the total wrong approach: tell them what they need!"

At the same time, sea changes do occur, and a designer can't be left on the beach. Ford likes to muse on the gradual shift from white to black over the last two decades: from white clothes, carpeting, televisions, and cars in the 70s to black everything in the 80s and 90s. It's a reaction, he's convinced, to the coming of AIDS and a general grimness in urban life. The timing, for a man who eschews color, has been apt. The next sea change appears to be toward a new romanticism, a reaction against not only black but also the strung-out look that goes with it. At *Harper's Bazaar,* Tilberis's new operating byword is "S.E.S.": models should look sexy and elegant, and be smiling. Frills and lace are in. Softness is in. Color is in. Is Ford out?

"Frilly and lacy is totally wrong to me," Ford says with some irritation, "and the reason is I don't find it modern. You still have to walk down the street—today's streets. You have to feel safe, secure, confident. Our times are a little too tough for lacy, in my opinion." Instead he's headed, a bit cautiously, toward a new classic look.

"The pendulum of fashion swings," he muses. "Sometimes fashion is fashion. And sometimes nonfashion, very classic, is fashion." For the men's show, Ford's gone to two-button, classic blue blazers—"But not just classic, different classic!"—and shoes with rounder toes. Though he

"My worth dropped about 50 percent" when Gucci's stock fell last fall, says Ford.

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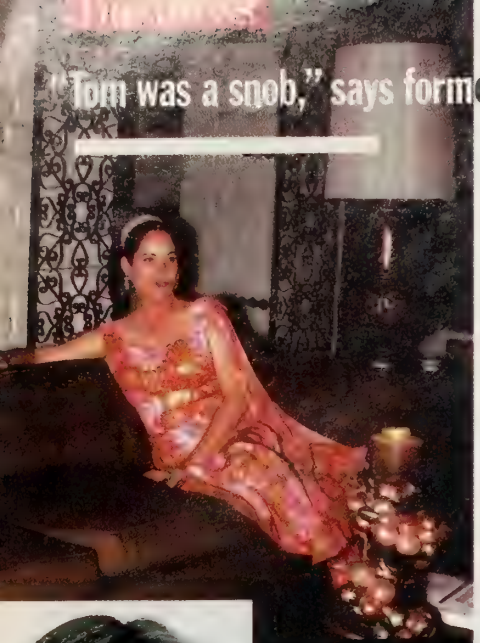


CLEAN FRESH UNDERWEAR.

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macy's

"Tom was a snob," says former *Interview* editor Bob Colacello. "But we liked snobs."











YOUNG MAN FROM THE PROVINCES *From top:* **Ford's grandmother Ruth, Santa Fe, 1963; Ford at 16; with then Gucci creative director Dawn Mello outside Harry's Bar, Florence, circa 1991; with his first boss, designer Cathy Hardwick, New York, 1988; in Mexico, 1997.**

doesn't say it in so many words, he's clearly aiming at Giorgio Armani, hoping his own tightly tapered suits—the antithesis of Armani's loosely draped look—can be, for the next generation of men, the uniform that Armani's has been for the past 20 years. For women too, the look will be more classic, but with three more months to finish the next collection, Ford is less clear, or perhaps just more secretive, about how that will be expressed: the search, at any rate, goes on. That it will end in brilliance, assure fashion's leading arbiters, is not in doubt.

"A designer like Tom or Helmut Lang or Marc Jacobs will freshen up their look or give it a new silhouette," says Wintour. "But they're not suddenly going to put huge ornamentation on their clothes. We'll see more ornamentation on a shoe, but Tom can do that within his own style. In fact, the most important shoe of the fall collections was his." "You don't want to see him do John Galliano," adds Tilberis. "He moves forward enough for us to appreciate the changes. That's the greatness of a really good designer: he's out there on his own, and then we assimilate it."

Meanwhile, involved as he is with Gucci's global business, Ford has spent a lot of time these last six weeks worrying about Asia. Nearly half of the company's revenues come from Asian customers, particularly the Japanese, who prize luxury leather goods even more highly than do Westerners and until recently flew in droves to Hong Kong and Hawaii to buy them on the cheap at duty-free shops. Last September, Gucci's Domenico De Sole became the first luxury-goods C.E.O. to warn of a slowdown in Far East business—despite, in Gucci's case, a 29 percent increase in sales by midyear. For its candor, Gucci was rewarded with a 50 percent drop in share price over the next two months.

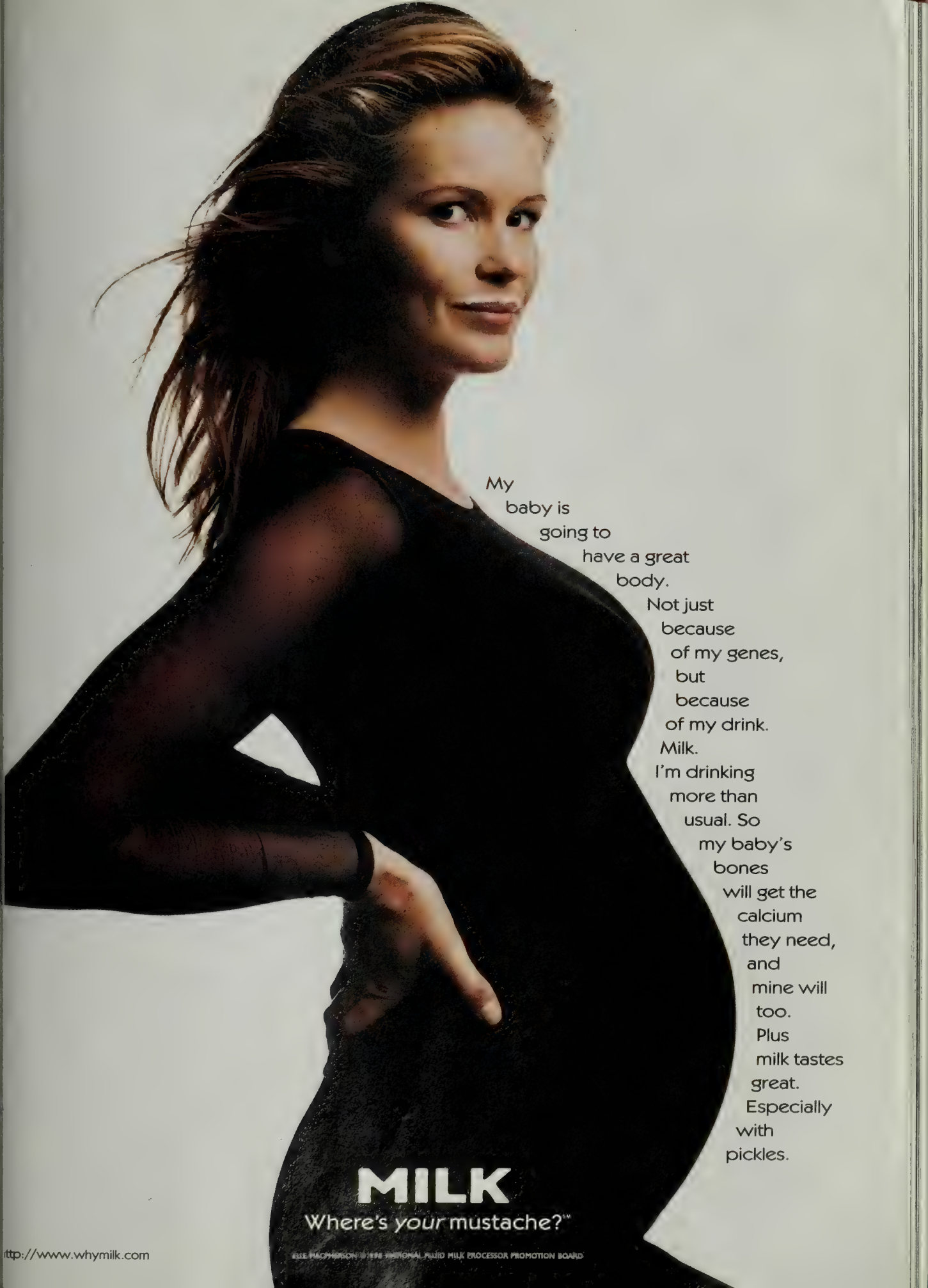
For both Ford and De Sole, the drop had rather dramatic personal consequences. Their worth in company stock isn't large enough to require public disclosure, but analysts figure each was worth about $80 million on paper last spring and only about $40 million now. "My worth dropped about 50 percent, yes," Ford says evenly, "but I'm not going to tell you what the numbers are. that's all right. It's paper. And I a long-term commitment."

The larger implication is that with its stock so low, and its profits still relatively high, Gucci is a takeover target. "Anyone who's got two and a half billion can have it," observes Edouard de Boisgelin of Merrill Lynch. "It's a public company; there's not much they can do." De Sole did try instituting a poison pill of sorts: by his provision, large shareholders would be hard-pressed to exercise clout. De Sole says it was meant to protect small shareholders from being railroaded. Clearly it was also meant to keep the company in current hands. The provision failed. "Some of the biggest shareholders voted against it," De Sole says glumly.

Certainly, one keen observer of these proceedings was L.V.M.H., the French conglomerate headed by one of fashion's most artful businessmen, Bernard Arnault, which owns Christian Dior and Givenchy, among others. As Gucci's biggest rival, L.V.M.H. is rumored to be circling, which has fostered another rumor: that Gucci is trying to find an American white knight to buy 30 percent of the company. De Sole denies this. And Ford waves off the threat of L.V.M.H. and its aggressive chairman. "Why would a man whose main business is so dependent on the Asian market buy a company that has depended to a large extent on the Asian market at a moment when predictions for the Asian market over the next 25 years are not great?"

To deal with that forecast themselves, Ford and De Sole are working to prop up the brand in cities where it has languished. "If you look at the business Giorgio Armani does in Houston or Dallas or Chicago, we haven't begun to go after that," Ford says. "It means stealing away store managers and buyers who have regular wealthy customers, and better service, and new tailors—all of that." If, despite those measures, a takeover comes, Ford is philosophical. "It's a very interesting time," he concedes. "But, you know, I've been through other interesting times at Gucci. I was there when the company was practically bankrupt and we didn't have photocopy paper and all my assistants had been fired. That was interesting."

Ford was, in fact, a virtually unknown designer in 1990 when he went to work for Gucci in Milan. Dawn Mello, president of Bergdorf Goodman, had just


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"I have this problem with color," Ford says with a wave at the rooms within his Paris apartment

Ford and [illegible]. *Top*, the study, with an [illegible] chair. *Above*, the [illegible] tables based on Jean-Michel Frank designs. [illegible] from the 1920s.

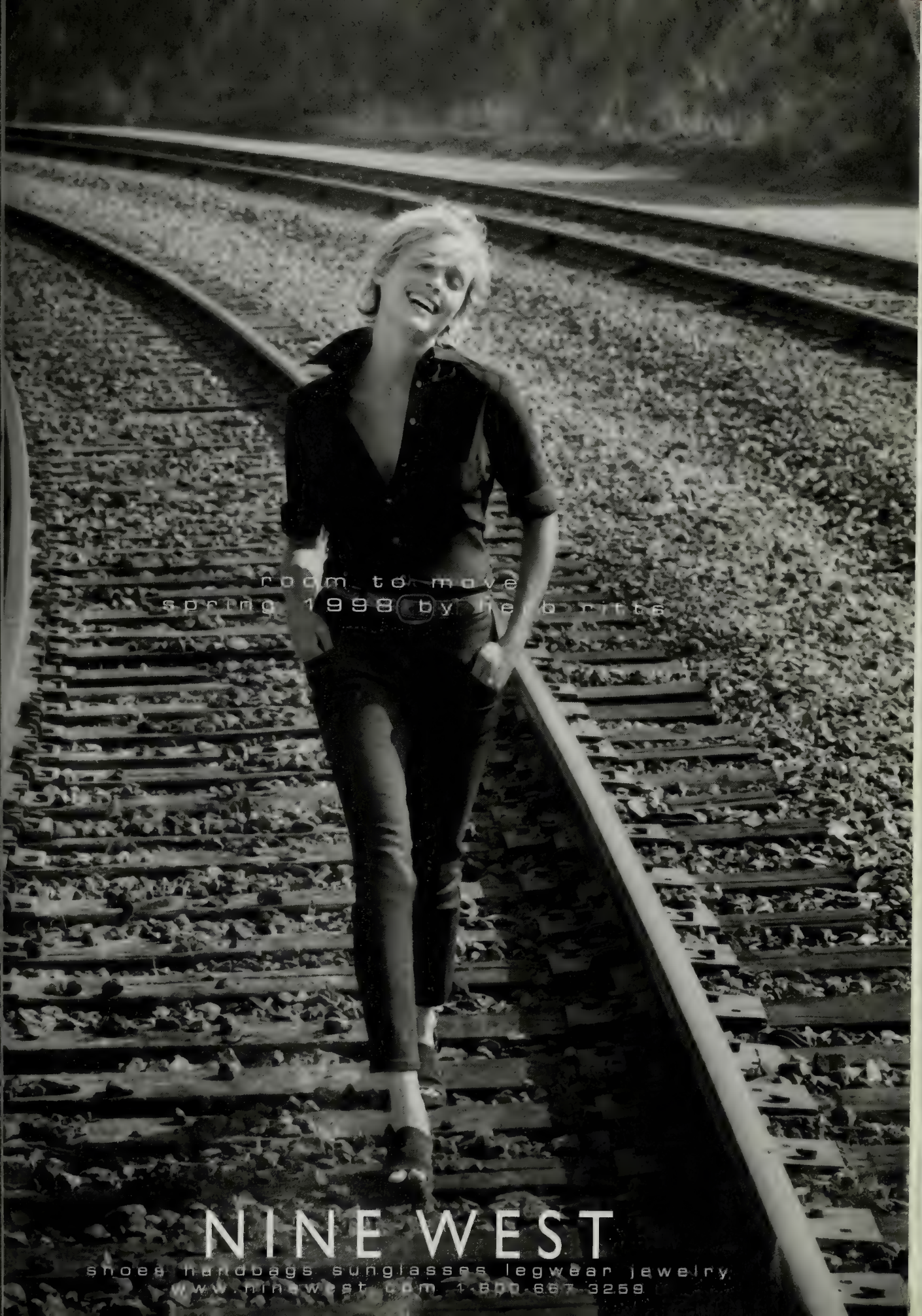
moved over to be Gucci's creative director, and hired Ford, then at Perry Ellis America in New York, to design an expanded line of women's ready-to-wear. He arrived in Milan at the dénouement of a very bad Italian soap opera.

Through the 80s, the Gucci clan had had notorious fallings-out. Some 15 lawsuits had been filed by relatives against one another. Rudolfo Gucci had died, leaving his 50 percent of the company to his son, Maurizio—a bequest, muttered detractors, made possible by the efforts of Maurizio's lawyer, Domenico De Sole. Then Rudolfo's brother, Aldo, patriarch of his generation, went to jail for tax evasion on evidence supplied to the court by his son Paolo. Aldo, who had parceled out 10 percent of his own half of the company to his three sons, had to endure the further indignity of seeing Paolo sell his 3.3 percent share to Maurizio, which gave Maurizio control of the company. Declares one former Gucci associate, "It's a business built on blood."

During the infighting, family members had milked the brand by making myriad licensing agreements—some 22,000 in all—that produced mediocre goods. Maurizio slashed licensed products and sales outlets alike, intent on restoring Gucci to its former glory. Cash flow dried up, however, and the company went into a tailspin. This was a shock to Investcorp, the Bahrain-based company that had bought half of Gucci in 1988 for $160 million with the hope of taking it public in four or five years for a killing. It also made life extremely difficult for Mello and Ford.

"We couldn't pay designers," Mello recalls. "So they all left, and Tom became the sole designer for all 11 product lines. There were days when he never slept." Ford wasn't always sure he'd be paid, either. But the experience was terrific. Early on he designed a clog that outsold Gucci's traditional loafers; a trendsetting stiletto heel did even better and is still, in various permutations, among Gucci's biggest sellers. But while Ford was relatively free to design shoes and accessories as he wished, Mello had strong ideas about what Gucci's ready-to-wear should be. Along with Maurizio, she wanted a classic look. Only when Mello reclaimed her old job at Bergdorf's in mid-1994 was

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Ford able to create his own Gucci style.

By then, Investcorp had bought out Maurizio's remaining interest for some $170 million, and installed De Sole as C.E.O. (Maurizio would be shot to death on a Milan street in 1995, apparently for failing to pay back a personal loan from the wrong people.) "I was the only designer on the team who was left," Ford explains. "Domenico was the businessman who was left. The two of us were thrown together. And Investcorp was sorting out the company. The last thing they were even thinking about was the design. So I had this open window to do whatever I wanted! I could send anything down the runway; no one else would object."

At first, the two survivors made for wary partners, each advised by gossips not to trust the other. Lines had to be drawn: when De Sole tried to sit in on a handbag-design meeting, Ford threw him out, and a furious argument ensued in the factory parking lot. De Sole backed off. "He had no choice," Ford says. De Sole acknowledges he was nervous. "We were under real pressure." Investcorp was said to have given up trying to take Gucci public, and to be shopping the company for a pittance to L.V.M.H. If Ford and De Sole hoped to stay in charge, they had to act fast.

Yet Ford's first collection as design head, in October 1994, was a bust. "Very 1950s," recalls *The New York Times*'s Amy Spindler. "Teapot prints, dirndl skirts . . . " Ford realized he was holding himself back, still hindered by Mello's classic perspective. Fortunately, he and De Sole had come to trust each other: De Sole had given Ford his freedom, and the designer had shown he was a shrewd businessman, making the most of a then skimpy advertising budget. The design breakthrough came in January 1995, with a men's collection of stunning, futuristic glamour, highlighted by patent-leather coats and pants with an almost metallic finish soon seen in knockoffs everywhere. These, as Spindler observes, were clothes for jet-setters, not stay-at-home socialites. There, and in the March 1995 women's fall collection that followed, Ford showed a tightly focused range, ruthlessly edited to emphasize one new shoe, one new accessory, one new day and one new evening look. After years of sitting through overlong collections with a hodgepodge of outfits, the fashion world found his clarity, and his cool, exhilarating. "By the next season," says Spindler, "everyone knew."

Among the most delighted parties was Investcorp, which staged its initial public offering after all, issuing stock for half the company in October 1995, the rest a few months later. As Gucci's worldwide sales doubled, then doubled again, other designers staged I.P.O.'s of their own, among them Donna Karan, Ralph Lauren, and Mossimo. Fashion houses realized that their business had gone global, both in design and distribution, and they'd better go with it.

With half a dozen successful collections to his credit now, Ford at 36 has become the Gucci man he envisioned when he did his breakaway collections: a rich and famous jet-setter. He should be thrilled. He isn't. "Live by the buzz, die by the buzz saw," he says dryly. "The higher you go and the more the whole thing is buzzed and yakked, the more you just know they're going to rip you down."

On the few nights each month they're together in Paris, Ford and Buckley often go for dinner to a small, charming restaurant called Marie & Fils on the nearby Rue Mazarine. Inexpensive, quiet, and good, it's also distinguished by a leggy waitress in slinky black pants that bear the alluring label Pussy Pants. "Wish I'd thought of that," Ford says as we settle in at a table by the window.

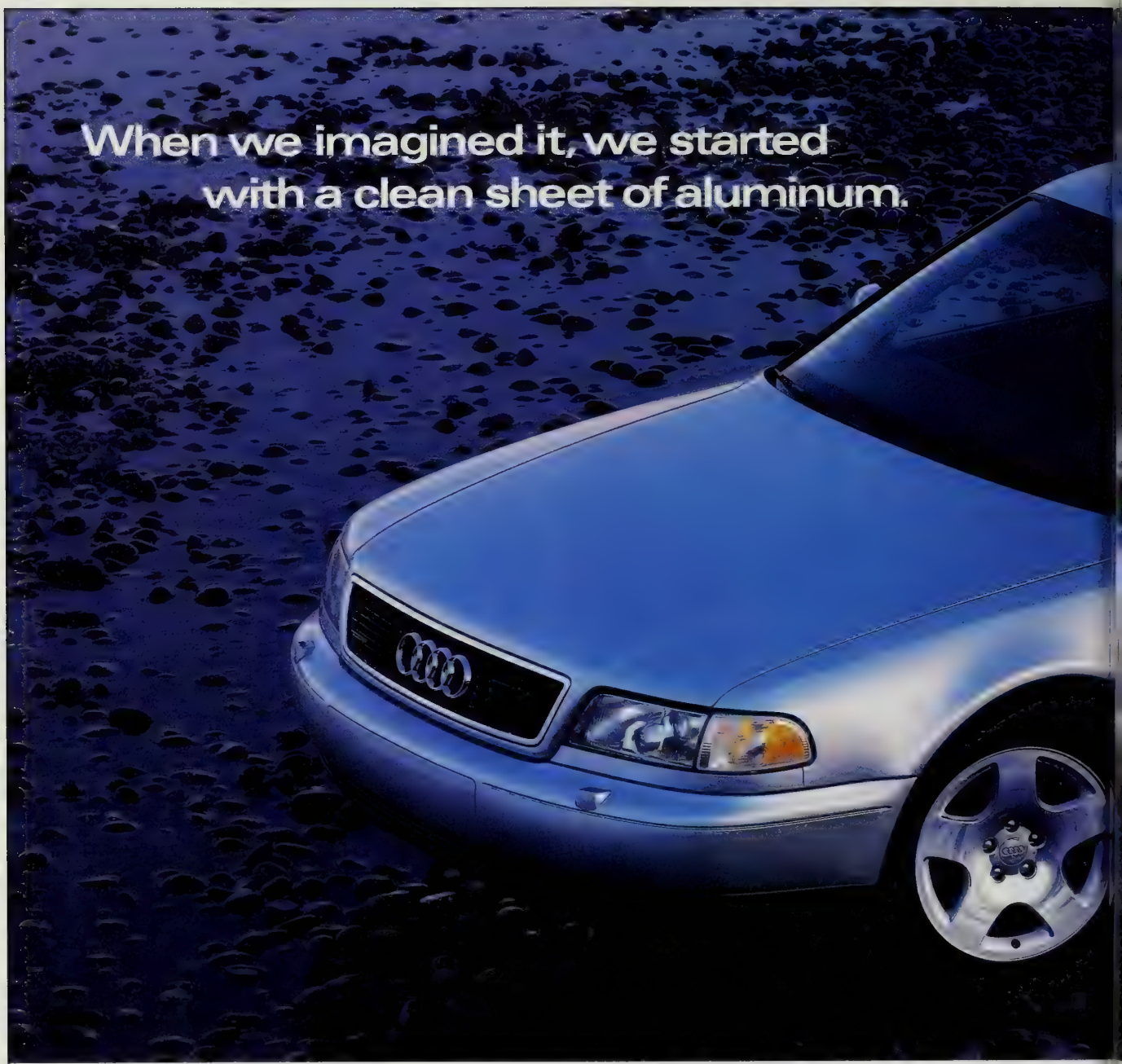
In his own designs, Ford gives allure a hard edge: the woman clad in Gucci has done it all, knows what she wants and whom she wants to do it with, and lets nothing stand in her way. It's an image of femininity, as Ford observes, that a lot of men and women find exciting, and one that reflects his belief that sexual roles are more changeable, more fluid, as he puts it, than society's labels suggest. Proclaiming oneself gay is just one of those labels, he says, which indeed in his case is especially confining since for his first 18 years he thought he was straight.

In Santa Fe, where he spent his teenage years after a Texas childhood, Ford dated girls, and handsome as he was, he had no shortage of choices. Perhaps his love of fashion should have clued him in; as his friend illustrator Ian Falconer says, "He dressed too well to be straight." Ford's two poles of taste were his mother, who looked, as he says, exactly like the actress Tippi Hedren—blond hair worn up, clothes very tailored, simple high heels—and his paternal grandmother, Ruth, a flamboyant, fashion-obsessed Auntie Mame character who wore "big hats, big hair, big fake eyelashes, and big jewelry—bracelets, squash-blossom buckles, concha belts, and papier-mâché earrings." When his grandmother put her house on the market a few years back, he paid a sentimental visit. "It smelled the same way, it looked and felt the same way. I'd lost my virginity right there on the floor . . . " So he bought it.

"Given his eye and the way his sensibility works," says CAA's Bryan Lourd, "there's no reason he won't be a film director."

Though his family wasn't wealthy—both parents were real-estate brokers—Ford wore Gucci loafers from the age of 13 ("People used to tease me about Gucci"), attended tony Santa Fe Prep, and went east to college, at N.Y.U. Lonely at first, he jumped at a classmate's invitation to go to a party and then to Studio 54. "I had no idea there was an ulterior motive," Ford recalls. The party was hosted by a young man-about-town named James Curley; when he and Ford's new friend Ian Falconer greeted each other, they kissed. "We went into this party, and all of a sudden I realized that everyone there was a guy. And they were all kissing each other, which seemed stranger still. And then someone said, 'Oh, Andy's coming by any minute.'" Warhol did arrive, and the group sailed off to Studio 54, where Warhol asked the handsome new boy earnest questions, and drugs appeared out of nowhere. "It was a bit of a shock," Ford says. "He couldn't have been too shocked," says Falconer, "because by the end of the night we were necking in the cab."

Soon Ford was going out to Studio 54 every night, sleeping most of the day, and attending virtually no classes. "It was exactly what you wanted if you were a kid from Texas and New Mexico and had come to New York. It changed my perception of everything. I've fed



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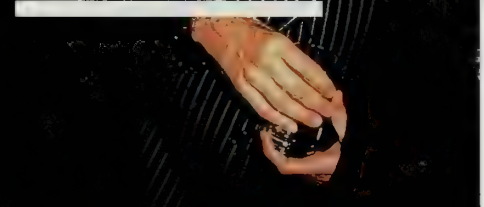
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"It's like *A Star Is Born*... I was the one who knew people," says Ford's boyfriend, Richard Buckley







GUCCI COUP
From top: **Ford and Richard Buckley, Paris, 1997; with models at the Gucci fall 1996 collection, Milan, March 1996; talking to Jon Bon Jovi and Donatella Versace at the Versace-boutique opening, New York, 1996; with Bianca Jagger, New York, 1997.**



off that period a lot in my work." Warhol especially intrigued him. "I'm not sure he wasn't a bit evil. But he was so smart." *Vanity Fair* contributing editor Bob Colacello, then editor of Warhol's *Interview* magazine, remembers Ford as "one of those preppy kids who hung around the Factory on an occasional basis. He was very good-looking. He had longish but neat dark hair, sort of swept over his forehead; he had a great smile, which he still does, a toothpaste-ad smile, and he was always in a blue blazer and blue oxford-cloth shirt, Levi's 501s, and Bass Weejuns or Brooks Brothers cordovan loafers. He was a sweet kid, with an all-American freshness, and a bit of a snob. But that was all right. We liked snobs."

With his good looks, Ford began acting in television commercials—at one point he had 12 running concurrently—and dropped out of N.Y.U. at the end of his freshman year. "Everything I loved about my life had nothing to do with school," he says. Eventually he went to Parsons school in Manhattan for environmental design. One night close to graduation, he concluded that he would make a good fashion designer. "It was a very calculated decision," he says. "I could speak well, didn't look bad, liked fashion—I had all the necessary tools! And once I figured it out, then it was just a matter of how to make it happen."

Ford put together a book of sketches and told prospective employers he'd just graduated from Parsons, neglecting to add that his degree was in architecture, not fashion. He met a lot of rejection, but wasn't bothered at all. "I guess I'm very naïve, or very confident, or both. When I want something, I'm going to get it! I was going to be a fashion designer, and one of these people was going to hire me, and that was that." Finally he found a vulnerable target in designer Cathy Hardwick. "He called me every day," Hardwick recalls. "Then every week, every two or three days. I told him on the phone that I had no position open. But he was very polite. 'Could I just show you my book?' Finally I gave in one day. 'How soon can you come up?' 'One minute,' he said. He was down in the lobby."

Ford became Hardwick's assistant, making $32,000 a year. He did anything she needed. One day, she sent him to help get her apartment ready to be photographed by *The New York Times*. The apartment had been done by Mario Buatta, who was there and in a tizzy making last-minute adjustments. "He looked stunned at the way I was moving around," Buatta recalls. "Decorators get sort of frantic when the *Times* is coming, at least I do. And he was from the leisurely world of fashion. So I kept whirling around, and suddenly I realized he'd vanished. 'Where is that Tom guy?' I bellowed. I found him hiding in the bedroom! And then I really got mad. I said, 'I would never have someone the likes of you as an assistant.'" "And I," Ford said, "would never work for the likes of you!"

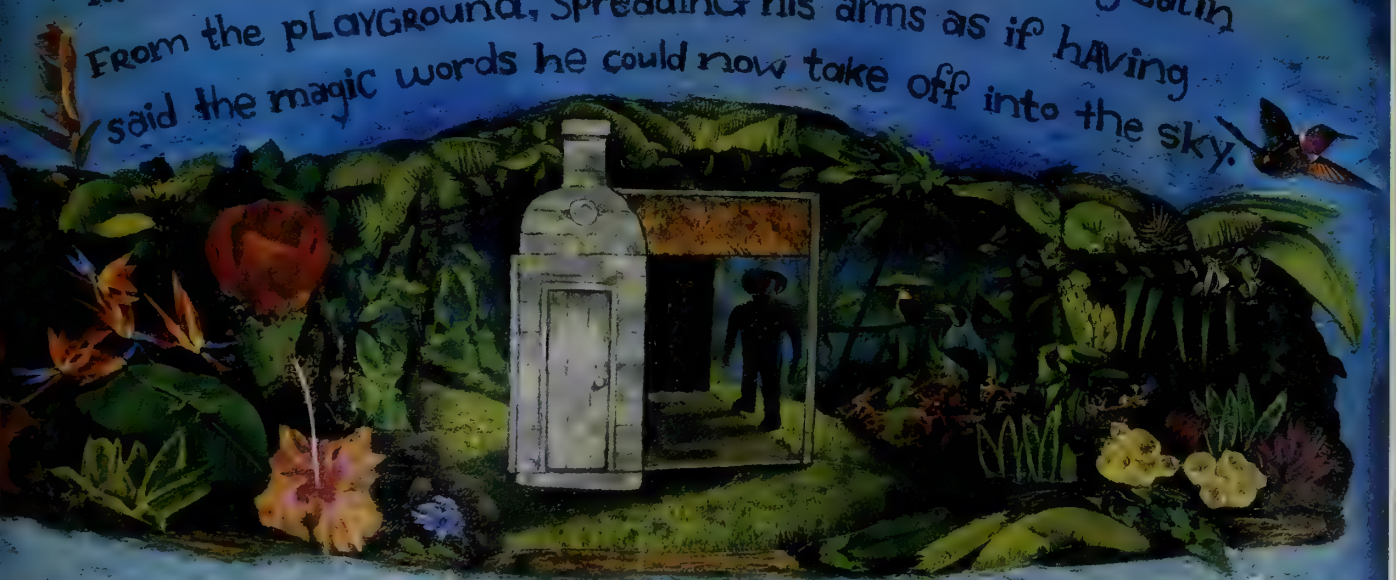
Aside from Hardwick, who had become a close friend, nearly everyone in Ford's life now was male, and gay. He'd confided in his father, but his mother seemed not to want to know, and his parents were getting divorced, "so I thought, Why throw it in her face? The day my mother asked me was the day I told her." Ford was 29. The issue of coming out still rankles him, though. "Maybe it's because I'm one of the lucky people who's always felt comfortable with myself, [but] if someone asked me to describe myself in 10 words, 'gay' wouldn't even be one of the 10 words. . . . I would like it if one day our species would transcend all this, so that you'd say, 'Oh, are you going out with John?' And I'd say, 'I was going out with John, but we broke up; now I'm dating Lisa.'"

Sexuality is fluid, he's convinced. "You move in and out. I feel more toward the heterosexual side of the scale at this stage in my life than I did 10 years ago. And, honestly, if I weren't in a relationship with Richard now, which I am, and very committed to, there are women I'm very attracted to, who I would hate to think wouldn't consider me as a boyfriend because I was 'gay.'"

It was Hardwick who introduced Ford, whom she calls "Tender Tom" to distinguish him from an older Tom in her family, to Buckley, then an editor at *WWD*. Buckley had noticed Ford at a fashion show, and asked Hardwick about him. Ford does a dead-on imitation of Hardwick's Korean accent: "Ah, Tendah! Reechahd Buckley from the *Women's Wear Daily* likes you! You have dinner with him, deah, he'll put

SECOND FROM BOTTOM: BY NUES TADIM; BOTTOM: BY DAN LECCA. ALL OTHERS BY ROXANNE LOWIT

I went down to the island to do a piece on the uses & misuses of the land and there i met some men and women who wanted to keep the rain forest alive, the rivers clear, the stars in the sky. They said, there is a man who says he is a priest who has been talking the farmers into selling to the Canadians. So we went to see him at his makeshift chapel and there on the altar was an Absolut bottle full of cayennas and birds of paradise. So I said, where did you get the bottle, thinking of the Canadians at the dam settlement. And he said, My child, all objects on this altar are religious articles, the chalice that looked like a wineglass, the oilcloth altarcloth with slices of pink watermelon, the paten like a plate for a spoon with which to stir a concoction, the precious ciborium full of what looked like everybody's least favorite easter candy... But what about the bottle, i pointed to the vase of flowers. That is latin for God almighty Absolut Absolutorum he said in Pig Latin From the playground, spreading his arms as if having said the magic words he could now take off into the sky.



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THOSE WHO APPRECIATE QUALITY ENJOY IT RESPONSIBLY.

lots of pictures of our clothes in the *WWD*!" Eleven years later, Hardwick likes to remind Ford that in the Korean culture a matchmaker whose match lasts more than a decade is entitled to a huge present from the happy couple. "'Tendah!' she'll say. 'Where's my car?'"

Early on, however, the relationship seemed doomed: Buckley developed tonsillitis, which turned out to be cancer. When a surgeon announced that Buckley had a 35 percent chance of living five more years, Ford began calling influential New Yorkers on Buckley's *WWD* Rolodex out of the blue. One was Blaine Trump. "He said, 'Richard would be very upset if he knew I was calling you, but he's in trouble; can you help?'" Trump, who was on the administrative board of Memorial Sloan-Kettering, used her clout to get him in right away. "It was hard for him to call a stranger," Trump says of Ford, "but that's the person Tom is." Months of painful radiation followed, during which Buckley doggedly came to work every day in a new job—as an editor at *Vanity Fair*. When it appeared the treatments had killed the last of his cancer, he and Ford decided the stress of New York might have been an unhealthy environment. Ford, then working at Perry Ellis America, persuaded Mello to hire him at Gucci. Mello called *Mirabella*'s founder, Grace Mirabella, who hired Buckley as her new magazine's European correspondent. The two men started work in Milan the same day.

"If I weren't in a relationship with Richard now," says Ford, "there are women I'm attracted to. I'd hate to think they wouldn't consider me as a boyfriend because I was 'gay.'"

Nine years later, at 49, Buckley is healthy and fit, a lean, austere figure with silvery hair, ice-blue eyes, and chiseled features. Over coffee at a big, brightly lit hotel near the Paris apartment, I ask him the obvious question: next to cancer, can there be anything harder on a relationship than the sudden, brilliant success of a younger partner?

Buckley laughs wryly. "It's like *A Star Is Born,* isn't it? 'I am Mrs. Norman Maine!' It's true that I was the one who knew people, and when we went places in New York, people would always ask Tom, 'Now, what's your name again?' Flash forward to *Vanity Fair*'s Oscar party two years ago. There was some Hollywood decorator there; we kept bumping into him, and he kept introducing people to Tom, and he'd turn to me and say, 'Now, what's your name again?'" Buckley shrugs. "I don't know. . . . There have been moments where I've had to remind him I'm not his assistant or his secretary, but that doesn't happen very often. If we were both designers, and I was a star, and then suddenly I was designing for Kmart and he's suddenly Tom Ford of Gucci, that might bother me. But I'm a journalist. I have a certain tenure in the business. . . . The only thing that's really hard is that he travels so much.



We don't have the home life we used to have."

That may change as the two consolidate their lives in London. Along with setting up a main residence, Ford is moving his design studio there, which may make for less jet-setting. On the other hand, he's pondering a prospect that would mean even more travel: a new career as a film director. Far from being threatened, Buckley takes an older partner's pride in the prospect. "I don't doubt that if he wants to do that he will," Buckley says. "Because he's talking about it now the way he talked 11 years ago about wanting to be a designer."

"I am very interested in film," Ford confirms, "because it has a longer life span than fashion. Fashion is literally about a moment—the moment that someone walks into a room wearing an outfit that makes everyone gasp. Even later that night when she takes off her dress, it's gone. But you can see the dress worn by an actress in a movie and have it be alive again when you play the video. And if you're a control freak, film direction is the ultimate: a whole world that you design."

Bryan Lourd, the CAA agent, acknowledges having had a number of talks with Ford about Hollywood prospects. He doesn't represent Ford—yet—and, as he observes, the man has a full-time job. "But in my mind, given his eye and the way his sensibility works," says Lourd, "there's no reason he won't be a director. If you're a fashion designer, you can go into film; that's the time we're living in." Exhibit A: *A Time to Kill* director Joel Schumacher, who started as a window designer at Bendel's. "But also, this guy specifically is so much a product of the film-and-television culture that I think he was more designed to do that, in a weird way, than to do what he's doing now. I'm certainly not encouraging him to leave what he's done—it's too much fun to see what comes out of that sick, twisted mind, but I think that he can travel if he wants to."

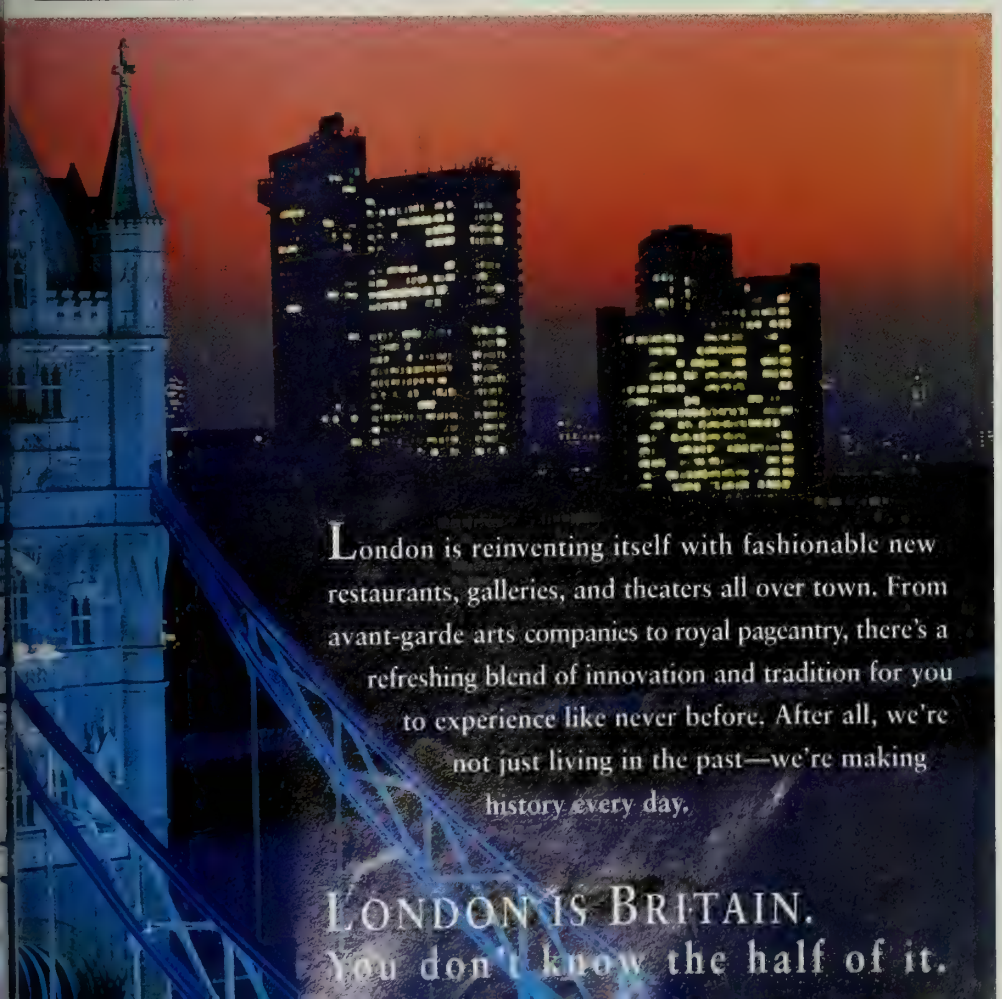
For the near term, Ford says, he'll stay at Gucci. "It's not finished for me. It's not done."

But to get to film or anything else, Ford needs to stay hot. He needs the next collection to work as well as all the others. He needs the next new thing.

Just after New Year's, I check in to see how it's going. His women's collection for fall 1998—the collection that bows this month in Milan—is nearly done. What's the new thing?

"I'm using a lot more color," he allows. "And things will be a lot less perfectly matched. There'll be more variation. Beyond that, I really don't know—and if I did, I wouldn't tell you!" In fact, 50 percent of the women's collection for fall 1998 is done and in the stores. But that's the lesser half. The rest are the clothes Ford still has to design before this month, from which will come the clothes for the runway, the clothes that define the next look. Ideas are turning in his head, but a lot will be left to eleventh-hour creative chaos. In these frantic days before the show, he'll be ripping out shoulder pads, changing shirt shapes and lengths, changing the tailoring—changing the whole thing. To yet a newer thing. "Whatever it is, it will be concise," he vows. "You'll see it over and over on the runway. So if it's publicized before, it won't have the impact it needs to have. The moment the light hits the first model, everyone has to be seeing it for the first time." And judging. *Is* it new? Is it right? Will it play? Will it sell?

This month, the verdicts come in. □



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UNSTABLE Ashland Farm, Warrenton, Va., the home of arms heiress Susan Cummings. *Inset, left:* Villegas and Cummings in July 1997. *Inset, right:* with officers Warren Jenkins (foreground) and Joe Higgs, Cummings leaves court in September.

LOVE'S DEADLY HARNESS

When Susan Cummings, the timid, gun-loving daughter of a billionaire arms dealer, turned her Walther semi-automatic on her lover, Argentinean polo player Roberto Villegas, their Virginia horse-country neighbors wondered: Was it self-defense or cold-blooded murder?

BY JUDY BACHRACH

It is safe to say that even before she shot and killed Roberto Villegas, Susan Cummings—one of the wealthiest young women in Virginia's lush green horse country—was by no means popular. Watching her ride her lovely chestnut mare one recent morning, I notice the horse's perfect canter and its rider's utter detachment. Her eyes are miles away, expressionless. I ask: "That horse you're riding, was it one of Roberto's?" She stares. "*Non, Madame*" is her swift reply. "They are *all* my horses."

Many of the members of her polo set call her aloof, peculiar. "All things considered, I mistrust people," she tells me, leaning down from her beautiful animal. "I put no trust in life! You know, there are people like that." We are in the riding ring at Ashland Farm, a 340-acre, manicured estate in Warrenton, Virginia. On Cummings's narrow left arm, hidden beneath a thin cardigan, are a cluster of knife wounds which her lawyer claims were inflicted by Villegas, whom she once loved.

By rights Susan should have been





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the belle of Fauquier County, for the 35-year-old is a thoroughbred herself, carefully reared, the product of summers in Switzerland and Les Franciscains, a school in Monaco, the country where she was born. Despite her American citizenship and 16 years Stateside, she speaks English with an accent stronger than her European mother's and pronounces her name Suzahn. Our interviews are conducted in an odd mixture of English and French.

So she was very different from her neighbors (who include Paul Mellon, actor Robert Duvall, and *The Washington Post*'s Donald Graham). Her insistence on grooming her own horses, for instance, was considered miserly. As was her attitude toward others. A Mexican groom who earns $22,000 annually reports that when he dated Cummings she invariably nudged him toward the cheapest item on restaurant menus. An Argentinean riding instructor, who caught Cummings's eye in 1995, insists she still owes him $600. (She denies both men's claims.)

For a long time, very little was known about Cummings, or about her father—a billionaire and former C.I.A. weapons specialist who made his fortune buying and reselling arms. But certain details now intrigue the neighbors. Such as: she slept with a special pal—a .357 Magnum. "Under her mattress," says a law-enforcement official. Visitors at the farm report other eccentricities: a weapons collection considered extensive, even in horse country; a television tuned during dinners of overcooked spaghetti to *Animal Planet;* place mats emblazoned with guns.

Roberto Villegas was everything his girlfriend isn't: garrulous, charismatic, often short of funds. For the last two years, at every polo match and point-to-point, they appeared to adore each other. He was her social security and hard laborer. She was his anchor, his surrogate family. "Hey, mother!" Villegas would call as he strolled into the stone 18th-century house after clearing brush, repairing the coal-black fences, or feeding the glossy mares.

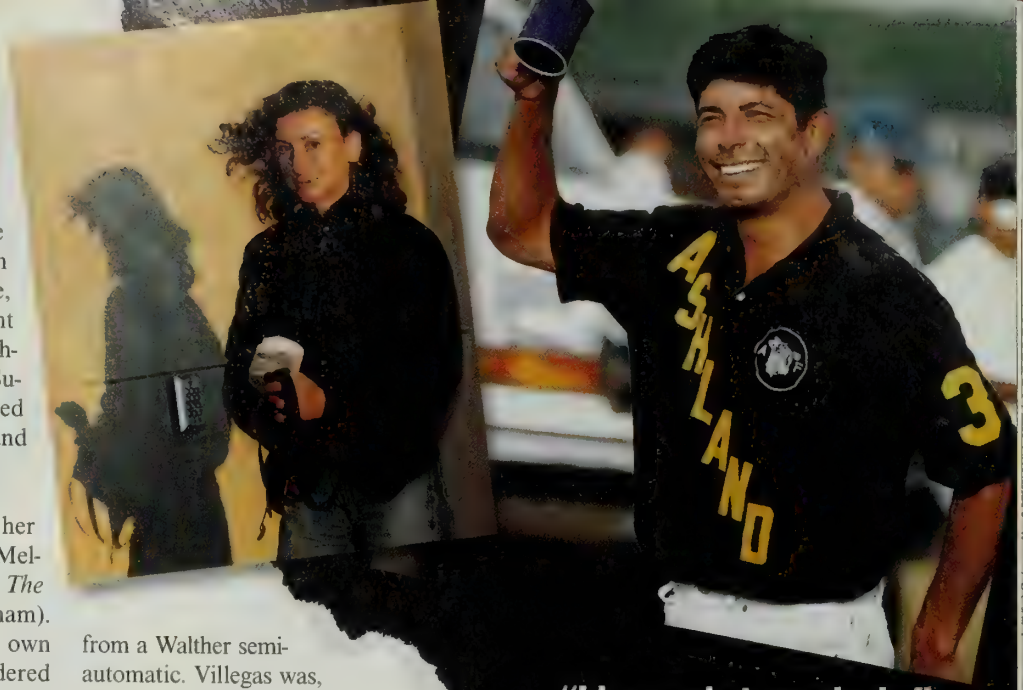
He led the retiring heiress by the hand to polo matches and cocktail parties thrown by the rich Virginia gentry. Then the hand dropped.

Early on the morning of Sunday, September 7, the millionairess put an end to the affair—with four rounds from a Walther semiautomatic. Villegas was, says a Virginia prosecutor, "caught completely by surprise." He was seated at Cummings's tiny kitchen table when the killing occurred. There were particles of croissant in his mouth, adds the prosecutor; he had been sipping coffee. By his side was a long, bone-handled knife. Cummings claims that he knifed her several times earlier that morning.

The Commonwealth of Virginia charged her with murder. "She shot him from the hall," says one Virginia law-enforcement official, adding that this is where the gun's holster was found. One of Cummings's bullets—the first, believes Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Kevin Casey—struck Villegas's right shoulder "from some distance away," perhaps 10 feet. It was not a mortal wound (the bullet passed backward, downward, and to the left, fracturing the left clavicle).

The other bullets went closer to the mark, specifically one that "tore through [his] neck, tore out his carotid artery, struck his spine, and burrowed 10 inches down his back." What is believed to have been the last bullet hit his back as well. "Villegas did not rise from his seat, and there was blood on his chair," Casey notes. "If he had seen her coming, he would have either turned his back on her or advanced and put his hands in the air."

The defense argued in an early hearing that Villegas advanced while Cummings fired. Casey says this is most unlikely. "Villegas was found with both legs under the table. He fell like a stone and bled out right there."



"I know what people do," says Susan Cummings. "There is wickedness all around the world, not just here!"

ARMS AND THE MAN
Top left: **Susan Cummings, whose father's fortune comes from international arms trading, in December after seeking court permission to visit Samuel Cummings in Europe over Christmas.** ***Top right:*** **Roberto Villegas after winning the Centennial Cup at the Great Meadow Polo club, the Plains, Va., July 1997.**

Susan Cummings is telling friends that Villegas had been terrorizing her for months. "You stupid bitch!" she says he once cried. "You're cold as ice. All the other girls, they fight back."

Virginia authorities don't believe that Villegas knifed Cummings. "Half an hour passed after the shots were fired before her emergency call came through to us," says one official who goes on to describe Cummings's wounds: "They barely broke the skin," he says. "And they were running down the arm lengthwise, not crossways. I don't see how someone slashing you can do this lengthwise."

He cites "a dramatic difference between the condition of Villegas's blood and that literally dripping down her arm when the cops arrived." Villegas's blood, says the official, "was coagulated. Like jelly." But Susan—with cuts far less

severe—was still bleeding when the sheriff's men arrived. If he attacked her first, he says, it doesn't add up. "Unless she has a blood disorder," an official adds dryly.

"Susan found herself in danger for months," says her mother. "If someone says every day, 'I am going to kill you,' this makes you reflect."

As many in the polo world realize, Villegas was by no means a one-woman man. "Playing around," says a law-enforcement official attempting to explain Cummings's motive. "That would be near the top of my list, if not the top."

"I was never jealous with Roberto," Cummings tells me. "Nor anybody else."

"I am interested in exactly how much planning may have gone into it," says Casey, who believes Cummings "set up a self-defense argument" more than two weeks before the murder. Last August she went to the police claiming that Villegas had verbally abused her so terribly that she feared for her life.

In fact, the heiress is often fearful. "You were born mistrustful?" I ask her.

"Yes! I think so."

Around us are flaming maples, magnolias, artificial lakes, oak benches embracing small grassy enclosures. Within Ashland Farm's borders of trimmed boxwoods, the bronze face of an ancient sundial promises, "Only sunny hours." Balancing on the fence that neatly encircles a spotless white barn is Cummings's one-eared cat, Geppetto, one of the many pets (a collie, a beagle, a terrier) she liberated from the pound. Inside the ring, a motherless calf named Ramona trots indifferently behind Graciella, a brown mare. Her owner grows moody.

"I know people," Susan Cummings tells me. "*I know what they do.* There is wickedness all around the world, not just here!"

"I understand from your friends you were trying to calm Roberto down on that last morning," I say. "I know you say he attacked you with a knife."

"I was *always* calming Roberto."

"Did your daughter learn to be such a good shot from her father?" I ask Irma Cummings. Her vast Monaco apartment overlooks the sparkling Mediterranean. Like the family's chalet in Villars, Switzerland, and its extraordinary pair of horse farms in northern Virginia, this luxurious place is decorated with pieces from her husband's impressive collection of weaponry and Russian military art. Samuel Cummings lies not far off. After several strokes, he is not expected to live much longer.

According to *Deadly Business,* Patrick Brogan's biography of Samuel Cummings, Susan's father is the world's largest private arms dealer. In the 80s he was considered responsible for one percent of the global weapons trade. He is especially fond of gold-plated Walthers, his gift of choice to favored clients and suppliers, including the King of Nepal.

"Her father teach her to shoot!" exclaims Irma Cummings. "This is certainly something I don't think one should learn, not learn at all! It is certainly something one should not teach to one's child—*non, non, non!*

"I am told not to talk of these matters because of the trial. But I will say *this* to you: Susan found herself in danger for months and months, and if someone says every day, 'I am going to kill you,' this makes you reflect: How can I defend myself? *You understand.*"

Another source close to Cummings says that the threats from Villegas, whom Susan described to police as "short-fused, nontolerant," had become so menacing that, long before the killing, she had stashed the Walther in her kitchen cupboard.

Despite the enormous wealth of Susan Cummings, the killing of Roberto Villegas has brought horse-country class lines crashing down. "I do think she planned it," Bill Ylvisaker casually declares inside his beautifully appointed Federal mansion in Middleburg. Here, an immense expanse of cream-colored rug lies surrounded by a trio of French mahogany armoires. Outside, directly across from a scarlet Jaguar convertible, a pair of bay mares gallop.

Ylvisaker, once the sponsor of Roberto Villegas, is a polo buff like many esteemed men, among them Lord Mountbatten, Prince Philip, Averell Harriman, and General Patton. When I ask what makes a polo player great, he does not mention courage. "Rich," answers the electronics entrepreneur, who founded the Palm Beach Polo and Country Club in 1979. "*First and foremost.*"

In order to understand the incredibly competitive polo world, it helps to know that only half of its residents are well-off. The patrons or sponsors—such as Cummings and Ylvisaker, who own the ponies and land—are often rich. But the hired "professionals" such as Villegas, who work and ride for them, are usually not. Many pros come from Argentina and are desperate for work. As polo manager Tommy Monaco points out, there are "too many pros. That's the main problem." Around 500 pros, he estimates, serve only 4,000 players.

Traditionally the best ponies have always come from Argentinean cattle farms, where they are used to herd livestock and learn to start, stop, and turn on command. Like their horses, the pros often come up the hard way.

In his late teens, Roberto Villegas fled his family's small farm in Argentina after his mother asked him to enter the seminary. He spent a few years grooming horses for top South American polo players, then went to Florida in 1981. He was 21. According to an old girlfriend who lived with him years later in Bradenton, just outside Tampa, he never even had a checkbook. "He was irresponsible, he wasn't a saver or a planner," recalls Kelli Quinn, who, tired of the polo life, broke up with Villegas after four and a half years. "He wouldn't grow up."

Depending on the cachet of the player who trains them, polo ponies can bring from $5,000 to $20,000. Villegas bought polo ponies "green"—or untried—then trained and sold them. But his luck was rotten: His best mare, worth about $15,000 as "Best Playing Pony" at the Kentucky President's Cup 1991, ended her career by devouring 100 pounds of oats. One pony was struck by lightning. Another broke a shoulder and had to be put down.

Yet Villegas scraped by. On rolling estates from Florida to Virginia, executives employed and housed him in their tenant cottages. Just a few years ago, a Tampa dentist fitted him, gratis, with a dazzling set of caps.

He excelled at arena polo—a more exciting, faster game than its traditional counterpart—which draws successful young southerners. Moving from Tampa to Middleburg to Palm Beach, "he flirted not just with women, but with men, kids, animals," recalls one female fan. "Roberto was the most social per-

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AKS FIFTH AVENUE

son in the world," says Suzi Worsham, whose husband, Travis, supplied Villegas with $3,500 for a horse trailer and paid his medical bills after he broke his jaw in a polo accident in 1993.

"He brought me into the sport, he was my first professional player," recalls Tim Gannon, founder of Outback Steakhouses, who met Villegas five years ago in Tampa. "He would play for whatever



"I wouldn't say Susan stalked us," says one of Villegas's former girlfriends, "but she would show up wherever we were."

THE LITTLE THINGS YOU DO TOGETHER
Susan Cummings's insistence on grooming her own horses was considered miserly by others in the polo set. *Above:* in September 1996, Cummings and Roberto Villegas washed their ponies after the Willow Run Polo School games at the Great Meadow Polo club. A year later, she shot him dead.

I had, $300 to $400. He did it for love of the sport," says Gannon. "*Gracious* is what he was. He didn't care about money."

Eventually, however, the steak mogul, who has won the U.S. Open twice, outgrew his younger mentor, who did not appear to be destined for greatness. "Roberto was a star at the lower levels," explains one patron. "He never attained more than a four-goal handicap, mediocre by the standards of Argentina, or even Palm Beach." Charisma and daring can take a man only so far. Money can take him farther.

Three years ago, Villegas endured the breakup of a longtime relationship with Kelli Quinn. Their parting left him so distraught that she was worried he might kill himself.

Was he ever threatening to you back then? I ask. Hurtful? Violent?

The dark-haired Quinn shakes her pretty head. "No, no . . . I can't imagine it." Indeed, she says, Roberto was "really happy most of the time."

After our interview, a rumor prompts me to contact her again. "I hear you took out a restraining order against Villegas when you broke up. I hear he threatened you."

"I had made friends with this guy, and Roberto was a little bit jealous," she replies. "I was taking this fellow home. Roberto followed us on the highway and sort of swerved his truck in front of my car, and then drove off. I went to the cops. It was two and a half years ago. And I have regretted it ever since. Because I knew deep down he would never do anything to hurt me.

"I went to the polo club and found him sobbing. I don't want people to focus on this incident."

Within a year of this drama, Villegas began dating Susan Cummings. He had met her at a riding school outside Middleburg. At the time, he was involved with another woman, who prefers not to be identified. She says he was never abusive or threatening to her. On the contrary, it was Cummings who perturbed her. "I wouldn't say she stalked us," she demurs, "but she would show up wherever we were. At bars and restaurants. And sometimes at his house. I thought, a little unexpectedly."

By August there had been sightings of Cummings at Roberto's tenant house. Subsequently, she paid—in cash—the delinquent sum of $500 which he owed for boarding out his seven horses. The couple became inseparable. "I'd like you to meet my girlfriend," Villegas told his friend Vicki Leonard two weeks after meeting Cummings.

The heiress's few intimates now try to make sense of the relationship—without success. "I have known Susan for years, and I have cringed at who I saw her with—ugh!" says family confidant John Aycoth, a Washington trade consultant who sits in on Susan's legal-strategy meetings. "About Villegas I only have to say, Look at where she finds her dogs." Indeed, there are moments when members of Cummings's circle appear more horrified by her affair with a polo pro than by her indictment for first-degree murder.

"One thing I can assure you: he never spent one single night in her house. *But never!*" Irma Cummings tells me. "When they talk about him being her lover, I just have to laugh."

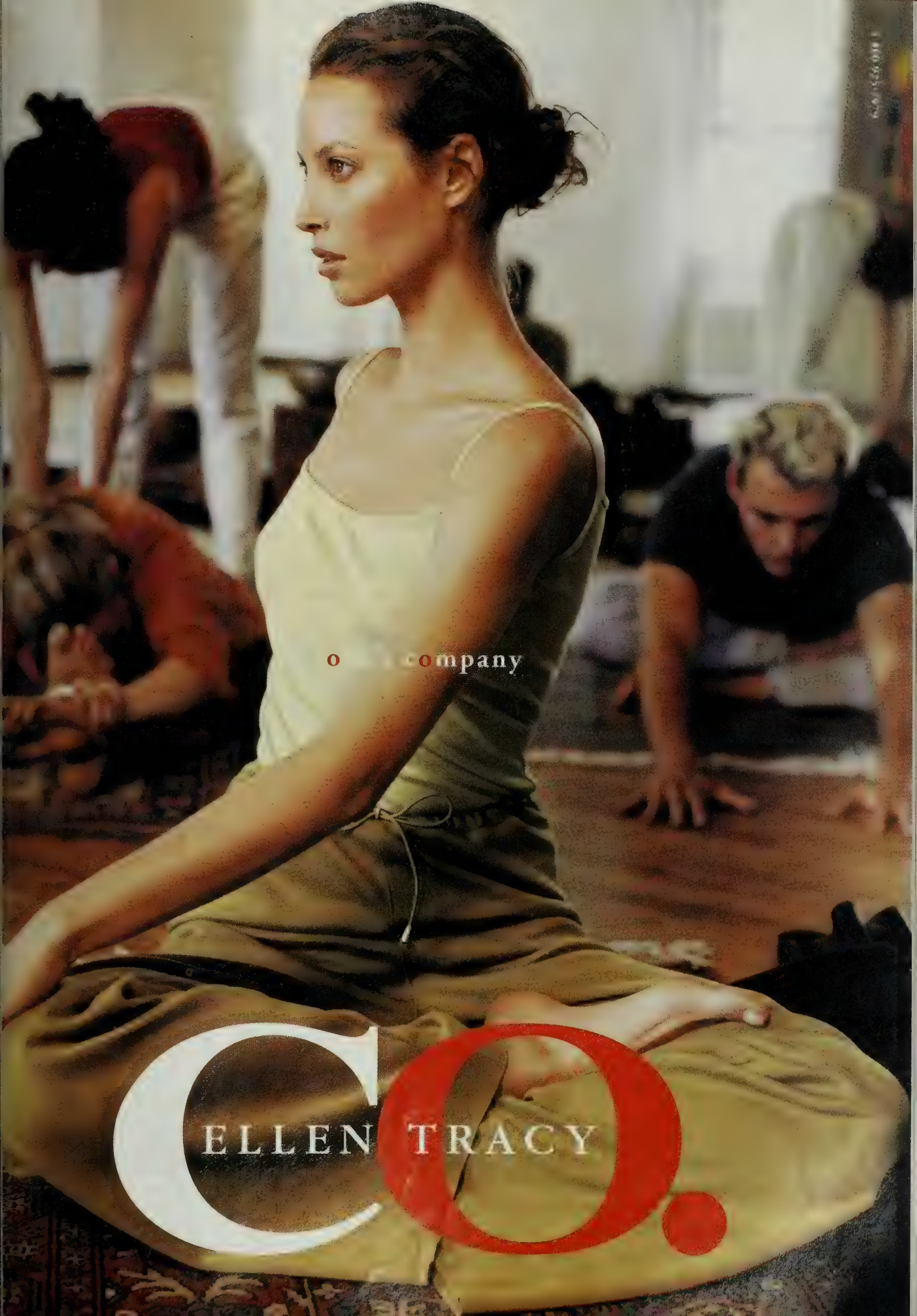
But shortly after his violent death a set of Villegas's clothes, his shoes, his shampoo, and his hairbrush were found at Ashland Farm. These were the main reminders of his presence. Susan Cummings sleeps as she might have as a child in Monaco: on a small, pristine bed crowded with stuffed animals. She also welcomes the live variety. Argentinean-born polo player Omar Cepeda recalls, "Roberto told me that one night the cat brought a frog into the bed. He said he felt something cold on his back. And Susan laughs and says, 'Oh, that cat is always bringing stuff into my bed!' "

The heiress's obsession with animals is a source of continual amusement to those around her. "Probably she would let herself be killed before they killed *un cheval,*" explains Mme. Cummings. "I know with women who have no children, these animals become their children! And me, I understand that. *Tout à fait.*"

Ashland Farm is actually the home of two women: Susan and her twin, Diana Cummings. The sisters might pass for strangers, so slight is their resemblance although as children they spoke "twin talk" and seemed wholly wrapped up in each other.

Blonde Diana grew up proud, assertive, partial to designer suits and jewelry. Today she has a deep, throaty voice and an authority her twin never managed to acquire. Susan speaks with eyes averted, nape-length curls framing a scrubbed and shining face. On October 9, the day of her preliminary hearing, she dressed in her habitual uni-

JULIA L. REARDON


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form: an old cardigan, black jeans, matching sneakers.

"Go out a little, have a little fun!" her mother would command Susan, in vain. "I always wanted her to have a young life. But this is a girl happy alone. This is a girl who is not used to the life outside."

Samuel Cummings, once congenial and outgoing, unlike his daughter, is basically a man of many, many countries. Upon discovering in 1971 that a controversial State Department action could deprive his expatriate twins of their American citizenship, the portly businessman proved quite resourceful. "Don't worry about this for a second—I can get them British citizenships in a flash," he assured a fascinated American official. "I have friends who can arrange them." Cummings, whose ancestors were British, did in fact become a subject; his daughters are dual nationals.

"Susan didn't know how much she had," recalls Zeferino Gallegos. "She'd say, 'I don't know if my father put $4 million or $5 million into my account.'"

The career of the arms merchant was filled with mystery. In the early 50s, he began working for the C.I.A., rustling up huge piles of abandoned war weapons to give secretly to Chiang Kai-shek and other allies. It is widely assumed that even after 1953, when he launched Interarms, his own private business, he never stopped his dealings with the agency.

"Remember: there's nothing in this world that Sam did, no place of business, that the U.S. and the British did not approve of," reports John Aycoth. "And the U.S. helped him set up his business."

"You mean the C.I.A. helped Cummings launch his weapons trade?" I ask.

"The C.I.A. is the U.S.," Aycoth says.

With headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, and Manchester, England, Interarms seems to have been founded upon the idea that a gun is a terrible thing to waste. Cummings would buy cheap or abandoned arms in one nation, then sell them at an enormous markup. "Sam's the ultimate deal-maker," says Aycoth.

Cummings fired up the late 50s by showering Cuba's wobbly dictator Fulgencio Batista with weapons, including a shipment of Armalite rifles. When Batista fell without paying, the arms merchant calmly billed his successor, Fidel Castro, who ordered more.

Susan's father was endlessly inventive and peripatetic. He met with Qaddafi's brother, sold M16s to the Chinese, and pushed the Swiss into parting with 150,000 Mannlichers and Swiss rifles. One Swiss rival estimated that during the last decade Cummings sold one billion pounds' worth of weaponry.

"But by far the largest part of this quantity of weapons went to the United States to be sold on the civilian market," writes the arms merchant's biographer.

About his line of work, Cummings was completely sanguine. The arms trade, he maintained, stems entirely from "human folly," the depths of which "had never been plumbed." Nothing fazed him. "I don't feel responsible when one of our pistols is misused and results in the death or injury of anyone," he said. "Is the Ford Motor Company responsible for the death of President Kennedy because he was riding in one of their products when he was killed?"

"He was adorable," recalls Irma Cummings. "He said to me, 'It doesn't matter what people say as long as you know you do right and can look at yourself in the mirror.' It was his children who counted."

His children, as it happens, were deeded the two spreads of adjoining property in rural Virginia in the spring of 1984. At the time Sam Cummings bought the property, locals say, he got himself a $1.5 million bargain. Ashland Farm is steeped in history. During the Civil War it was converted into an informal hospital, and, says the legend, a Union-army payroll is buried there.

"You can never have enough land, in my opinion," says Susan, who settled at Ashland Farm with her sister about a year after its purchase. True to their disparate natures, the twins have led what neighbors call "separate lives." Diana lives in a guest cottage. Susan inhabits the enormous main house, its lovely curves and green-tiled passageways enlivened by rows of colored ribbons from horse shows. Near a few Remington bronzes of mounted cowboys in buckskins are a couple of couches, some dozy old cats, and, in the laundry room, strewn garments and large boxes of scented kitty litter.

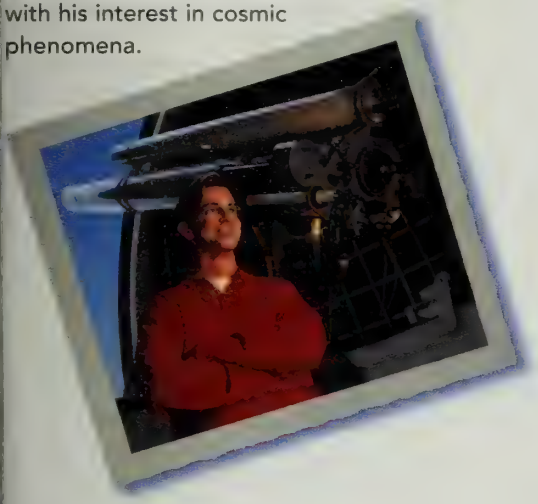
Susan rises at 5:30 each morning to feed the cats, then the dogs; next she goes to the barn to groom the horses. Nights can find her jittery, relying on her father's relics for comfort. A local painter who worked at Ashland Farm told a friend of receiving a midnight call from Susan. "She asked if any of his crew had been back at the farm. Evidently there had been a prowler about," says Warrenton resident June Miller, the painter's confidante. "She said she had a gun and knew how to use it."

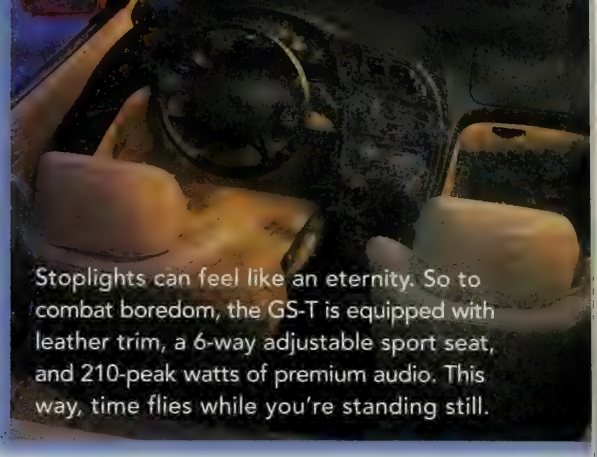
Around three years ago, Susan Cummings began dating Zeferino Gallegos, a Mexican-born groom, who she now claims "was never my boyfriend." "She was very nice, but kind of weird, you know? She never showed any emotions, any feelings—no, not really at any time," he recalls. On the other hand, the groom observes, if he looked at another woman, Susan Cummings's expression changed. "I'd say, Holy shit! She looks at me like a psycho! A scary look." All in all, he decided as his interest waned, "she looked like a raccoon."

"She didn't know how much money she had," Gallegos tells me. "She used to say, 'I don't know if my father put $4 million or $5 million into my account.'" But her money wasn't enough to make him stick around. "She said her best friend was her shotgun," he recalls. ("I never said that," Cummings says.)

Shortly after Gallegos defected, Cummings started lessons with Jean Marie Turon, a handsome Argentinean who runs a riding school outside Warrenton. It was the summer of 1995. Before too much time passed, Turon began thinking he was being tailed by his pupil. "I can't go anywhere. I go to Warrenton, the Plains, Middleburg, anywhere—a restaurant—she was there!" says the instructor. Jennifer King, Turon's girlfriend at the time, was unnerved. "Yes, yes, she did follow me everywhere," says King, who claims that on two

Tell David Hansen he has his head in the stars and he won't take offense. You see, David's an astronomy buff, and even his choice of car was influenced by celestial bodies. David drives a turbocharged, 210-horsepower* Eclipse Spyder GS-T, which aligns perfectly with his interest in cosmic phenomena.





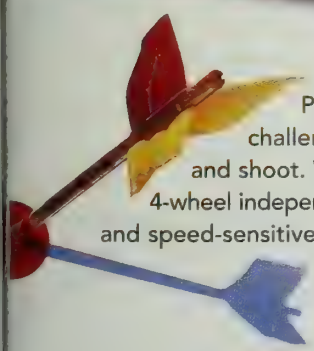
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occasions Cummings's white car roared up to Turon's house and "tore off" when its "terribly angry" driver spied her.

"I remember she was on a barstool in the summer of '95 when I was with Jean Marie; she was giving me this really dirty look for two entire hours. I said, 'This is really giving me the creeps.'"

"Jennifer, she's driving me crazy, too," her boyfriend assured her. "She's offered to buy me trucks and trailers and polo ponies. And I don't like it. I know what would happen if she did that. She'll have control over me."

Cummings's response to these allegations is brief: "*This is also a lie.*"

At some point King got good news. "Susan has a new friend—Roberto," Turon told her.



"I don't feel responsible when one of our pistols is misused," said arms dealer Samuel Cummings.

SHOOTING UP
Top: **Diana Cummings, Susan's twin, during a fox hunt in Fauquier County, Va., fall 1987.** ***Above:*** **Susan's father, Samuel Cummings—who began his career in the early 50s as a C.I.A. operative, gathering abandoned war weapons for Chiang Kai-shek—pictured at Interarms, his weapons company, in Alexandria, Va., November 1988.**

For almost two years, claim residents of Middleburg and Warrenton, Cummings and Villegas appeared genuinely happy. Under her tutelage, he gave up alcohol, dieted, and lost his paunch. Come October, he and Susan (who denies making any plans for the future with him) were going off to Montana, where the heiress intended to set up a wildlife refuge on $10 million worth of land. "So Roberto had all these really nice expectations," explains Turon.

"That was his *idée fixe,*" says Mme. Cummings. "My daughter told him honestly, 'I will never marry you!' She was clear and precise. She was no exploiter."

If there is a villain in this tale, say Susan's supporters, it is Villegas. And the longer I pursued this story, the more his alleged sins and those of his friends and countrymen were amplified by the Cummings camp. They say it was he who had murderous instincts, at least potentially.

"Murder, suicide—that's what I heard," explains Larry Levy, boyfriend of Diana Cummings. "But you know—Argentina. Some of those people treat women a little different." A month later, another Cummings confidant says: "There are at least four or five documented cases of [his] violence against women." John Aycoth elaborates on this theme in a sweeping hour-long conversation: "Villegas threatened to kill Susan, her sister, and Susan's friends. . . . There's a rumor that for fun he slit a bunch of blacks' throats and dumped them into the canal. . . . I know for a fact there's a fax in a newspaper office claiming he murdered someone in Argentina."

In mid-December, Cummings's attorneys asked the court to subpoena documents concerning a September 1987 arrest of Villegas in Naperville, Illinois. According to the report, Margaret L. Bonnell of West Palm Beach, Florida, claimed he had assaulted her. The case was later dropped.

"She was beaten," says Aycoth. "She had bruises." And, at the time, Bonnell did tell cops that Villegas "hit me with the flat part of his hand very hard on the . . . head. . . . He put a blanket over me so I would not be able to scream."

Bonnell, when I eventually locate her, laughs out loud after I remind her of her own words. "I was a mean, vengeful thing. Most of my story was false," she says. "I had bruises on my wrist because I had tried to hit Roberto and he had held me. I was always the physical one. He was always laid-back and very passive any time I was ready to take a swing at him."

She fell in love with the Argentinean in 1985. "He loved women. It didn't matter what they looked like," she says. "Lots of times we'd go to the grocery store; if a pretty girl is there, I knew that's where I'd find him." She pauses. "I'm sure he did the same with Susan. He did it with Kelli Quinn. He did it with all the girls."

The night of Villegas's 1987 arrest, two young women rang his doorbell. This precipitated a major shouting match between Bonnell and Villegas, who claimed he'd never met the callers. When the police arrived, he begged for his girlfriend's help. "Would you for God's sake do something? They're taking me to jail," he cried as they handcuffed him.

"I just smiled," Bonnell now recalls. "It was payback time."

When I inform her that she might be called by Cummings's attorneys, she says: "I can't wait. I'm really looking forward to it."

There is much she could tell. During the 1996 Christmas season, Villegas called to sing her a carol. "Everyone wants to marry me except you," she remembers him telling her. "Susan just proposed to me."

Susan Cummings's famous attorney, the Virginia huntsman Blair Howard, tends to put little credence in the words of the women who defend Villegas. "Mr. Villegas drove into one lady's yard and scared her half to death, but I will not disclose her name."

Was Villegas ever abusive to women?

TOP BY DOUGLAS LEES; BOTTOM BY JEAN-LOUIS ATLAN

I ask the prosecutor Kevin Casey. "Not that I know of," he replies. Another law-enforcement official says, "Physical violence, I've seen no indication. Mental violence, that's quite possible."

Apparently, Susan Cummings herself never wholly trusted Villegas. "She was suspicious of him," reports one enormously rich Virginia patron. Nonetheless, during the winter of 1997—not long before Cummings claims Villegas was threatening to murder her and kill himself—Cummings decided to go into business with him and set up a polo team, a venture estimated to cost about $100,000. That same month Villegas's friend Omar Cepeda received a call from his buddy begging to borrow horses.

"What happened to your horses?" wondered Cepeda.

"I sold them to Susan," Cepeda claims Villegas told him.

"See," says Tommy Monaco, manager of the Great Meadow Polo club near Middleburg, "he didn't get paid by her for playing polo! He didn't get paid for anything." Villegas told Monaco that he received no wages for his work on Cummings's farm. "It's not like she bought him fancy cars or clothes. She didn't give him spit. She paid all the expenses, but she didn't pay him a salary!"

"Eh—she's my mother, I don't care," Villegas assured concerned friends. "I want to settle down."

Those who went through Villegas's possessions after the shooting insist that Cummings never even paid him for his half-dozen horses. Her champions don't dispute this. But their excuses vary; some say that perhaps a few of the ponies were not his to sell. Others claim that just days before Villegas was killed he "threw back," as one describes it, a $20,000 check Cummings had tendered to get him out of her life.

Without a doubt, serious frictions were building between the couple. "The last time we spoke he told me he didn't think she was the kind of person he wanted to marry," reports his ex-lover Kelli Quinn. That was this past July. A month later, on two different occasions, Villegas told friends that he had returned to Ashland Farm very late at night to find Cummings firing her gun—once out the window, once in the house.

"That is a lie," says Cummings. "I never fired a gun out the window."

Around that time, Villegas also told a friend that Diana Cummings had blown him a kiss while sunbathing in front of Susan's kitchen. This greeting was followed by Diana's playful slap to his bottom.

"Susan was watching from the window. She chased Diana around the table," Cepeda says. Villegas was packed off to Susan's bedroom with a furious command from his girlfriend:

"Roberto! Go take a nap!"

The twins claim that the incident never occurred. However, Villegas was evidently a man who bore watching. Two weeks before his death, the polo player was seen at Mosby's, a local bar, in close company with another woman. At that same watering hole he had also made a pass—one of several, it seems—at pretty Deborah Rowe, a young jockey who is, oddly, Susan's friend. "I think he thought he was flattering me," she recalls.

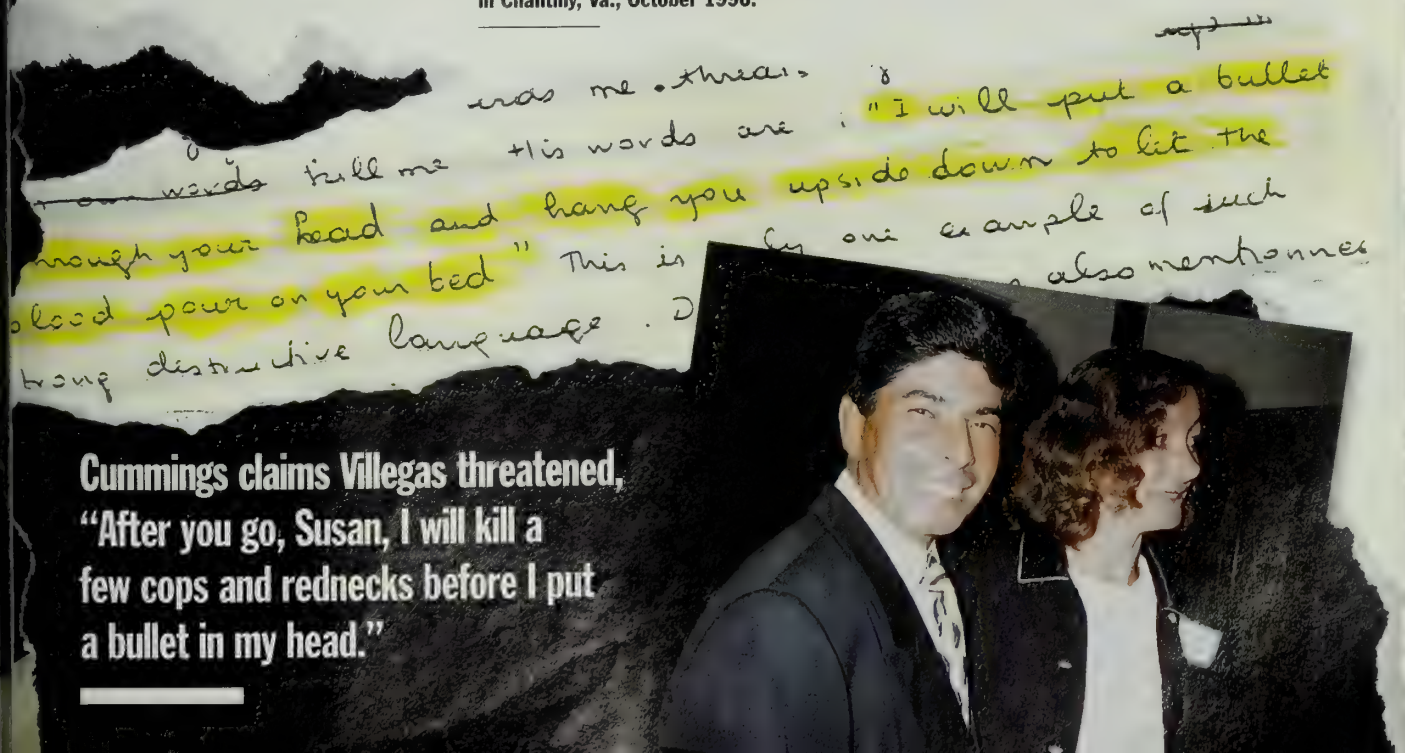
For her part, Rowe reciprocated no such tender feelings toward Villegas. In July at the polo grounds, the usually self-contained Susan Cummings had taken her into her confidence. Roberto, she said, had wrapped his hands tightly around her neck, squeezing.

"I had to draw it out of her," Rowe recalls. Most uncharacteristically, Cummings then talked about her private life. She had, she admitted, begged her boyfriend to leave for Florida come winter.

"What are you trying to do?" she said the polo pro had asked her, horror-struck. "Break up with me?"

In fact, Cummings's defenders maintain, she was trying to do exactly that. A little more than two weeks before she shot Villegas, she went to the Warrenton police with Deborah Rowe's mother (who, as one official says, "did much of the talking") and prepared a written statement, brimming with vivid

LOVE IS A BATTLEFIELD
Below: **a portion of Susan Cummings's statement, given to police on August 20, 1997, 18 days before she shot Roberto Villegas. The statement describes Villegas's threats.** ***Bottom:*** **Villegas and Cummings at a polo awards party at Sully's Restaurant in Chantilly, Va., October 1996.**



Cummings claims Villegas threatened, "After you go, Susan, I will kill a few cops and rednecks before I put a bullet in my head."

allegations. "And of course," one law-enforcement official says, "now Susan's on record as having done all this."

"I will put a bullet through your head and hang you upside down to let the blood pour on your bed," Susan Cummings maintains Villegas told her. "I will show you and all these little rednecks over here what a real man is. I will teach them who is the boss, and after you go, Susan, I will kill a few cops and the rednecks before I put a bullet in my head."

During all the weeks and months that the heiress claims to have been threatened, she was doing business, holding hands, playing polo with—to quote her—someone "struck with a mental condition." On her farm she worked by his side; at the barn they groomed the horses. She was seen with him at matches and parties. She even—48 hours before aiming straight at him with her father's semi-automatic—rode with him and the horses to a charity game in Pittsburgh. It was early September, and it was clear that Cummings was losing interest in Villegas.

Three days before the game, polo player Gary Leonard received a call from her. "The message was 'Roberto cannot make it. Can you find a substitute?' " he recalls.

Leonard told her that was out of the question. His caller relented: "Well, if you don't hear from me again, that means we're coming."

So they did go, and, at some point, an edgy Cummings approached Leonard, whom she barely knew, in his horse trailer. "I want you to know, the only reason I came up here was for you and the horses," she said.

On the drive back to Warrenton the couple quarreled bitterly, according to a family friend. The next day Villegas was scheduled to compete in a special polo match attended by the new Argentinean ambassador at Gone Away Farm, the Maryland home of attorney Joe Muldoon. The event featured 50 dignitaries and a general who refereed the match, one thousand bottles of wine, and tango dancers flown in from New York. It was the kind of glamorous event Villegas wanted to be part of.

But there was no way either Roberto or the horses he had once owned would play at the match. According to a family friend, Susan informed her lover the affair was over. "Come tomorrow, take your stuff and leave."

On September 7, Susan Cummings went downstairs. She claims she was amazed to find Villegas seated at her tiny kitchen table. "I'm here to get ready for today," the polo pro told her.

"What are you talking about? No!"

At this point she says that Villegas pulled out a knife and pressed it against her cheek. Then he methodically cut her arm.

"Roberto, calm down. Nobody's going to die here today. It doesn't have to be like this," the heiress says she told him. "Let's pretend none of this ever happened." Taking the bone-handled knife from his hand, she placed it on the table. "Let me make some coffee," she offered. She went to the counter, did some thinking. Could she make a run for it?

In one wooden cupboard lay her father's gun. Hastily, she retrieved it, intent on holding her enraged lover at gunpoint. Swinging around, she saw Villegas rise from his chair with a wild-eyed expression. Four shots were fired.

That's her version of the story, anyway, the one she tells to confidants. It is a version that puzzles Virginia authorities. "That gun was not taken from the kitchen; that gun was taken from another room," says one.

Every effort has been made to protect Cummings, who has provided no formal statement. Larry Levy, the bail bondsman who dates her sister, posted $75,000 bail. The heiress spent just one night in jail, far from the bloody kitchen which her twin cleaned up with her own hands. In December, Cummings was permitted to travel to Monaco to visit her ailing father, much to the amazement of Kevin Casey. ("I told a lot of people they would *never* allow her to travel abroad.")

Around that time a group of hungry investigators hired by Susan's famous lawyer, Blair Howard, fanned out, probing for damaging information about the dead man. They called the two sisters of Villegas's loyal ex-girlfriend, Kelli Quinn. The husband of the first sister hung up the phone after the first call, but the private eyes just kept phoning. The second sister, Quinn tells me, had a more disturbing encounter. "My sister was told by the detective, 'I hope you know Kelli will be called by the defense.' She said, 'Kelli won't make a very good witness. Neither she nor I will ever believe that Roberto was violent.' He said, 'Sure, that's what she says *now*. I hope you know that Blair Howard is just going to tear her up on the stand.' "

"I heard it myself about those private detectives," acknowledges Aycoth. "Some people called me and said they were a little rough with them." Then he counters, "I can't tell you how many women Villegas has abused. I can just tell you that in every place he's been, women have been abused."

The defense still harbors a few hopes that Margaret Bonnell will testify for them—although how helpful she will be is open to question. There are clearly things that their private detectives don't know about her, that almost no one knows. For example, she has an olive-skinned five-year-old son who Villegas believed was his son. He had promised to take care of the child if anything happened to Bonnell.

"You should see him," she says of her child. "He's a twin to his father." In fact, in September, a relative who saw the polo player's face on television called Bonnell to say she had seen someone who looked just like her little boy. That's how Bonnell discovered that the person she calls "my soul mate" had been shot dead.

In January, four months before Susan is due to be tried for the murder of Villegas, one of her defenders phones me with a new piece of information about the dead man. It is, by no means, the first of his follow-up calls. Scarcely a day passes without one, and I suspect that I am not the only reporter being fed ugly stories about Villegas. "Roberto used to make fun of her finger and that really hurt her." And Cummings's friend continues: "I suppose you know one of her fingers never grew."

Not, I gather, her trigger finger. □

"The last time we spoke Roberto told me he didn't think Susan was the kind of person he wanted to marry," reports Kelli Quinn.


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"My mind is full of pictures," writes *Harper's Bazaar* editor in chief Liz Tilberis in her autobiography. She is seen here in her office on December 12, 1997.

VANITY FAIR NOMINATES

Liz Tilberis

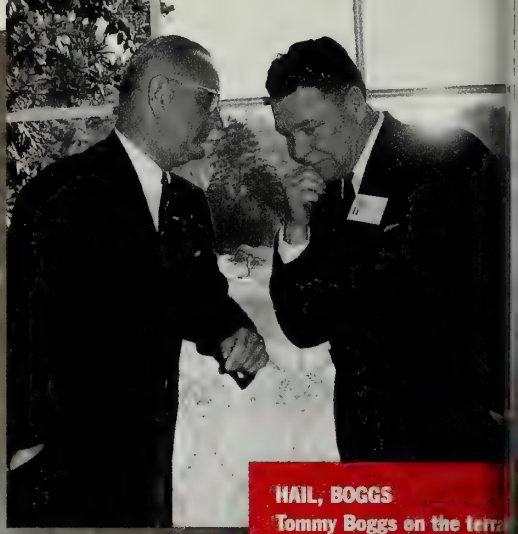
BECAUSE she came to New York just six years ago and has not only made it her home but has also become one of its most outstanding citizens. BECAUSE she took one of America's old, distinguished publishing titles, *Harper's Bazaar,* and turned it into a sleek, contemporary magazine read by everyone from mothers in the Midwest to fashion junkies on Seventh Avenue. BECAUSE she manages to be a devoted wife and mother while balancing a work schedule that would make even the most hardened corporate executive exhausted. BECAUSE she never misses an opportunity to lend her voice and endless energy to raise money so that others might not have to face what she has had to. BECAUSE I hired her, and then lost her the same day to British *Vogue.* BECAUSE she's funny, smart, gracious, and thoroughly down-to-earth. BECAUSE in *No Time to Die,* her new book about her battle with ovarian cancer, she tells a story that everyone can relate to, and does it in a way that helps others. BECAUSE, most of all, she has enormous depth of character. —RALPH LAUREN

PHOTOGRAPH BY PATRICK DEMARCHELIER



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HAIL, BOGGS
Tommy Boggs on the terra of his nine-floor office building in Washington, June 10, 1997. *Inset:* his f father, former House majo leader Hale Boggs, chats with then vice president Lyndon Johnson in the Wh House, October 11, 1963.

KING OF THE HILL

Scion of a legendary political family, brother of ABC News pundit Cokie Roberts, and partner in Patton Boggs, a law firm that raked in $90 million last year representing giants such as MCI and Sony, superlobbyist Tommy Boggs is the living heart of Washington's money culture

BY CARL BERNSTEIN

Tommy Boggs, Washington's premier agent of influence, is relaxing in the television room of his waterside farmhouse on Maryland's Eastern Shore, a few miles from his 425-acre duck-hunting preserve and its lodge, which seats 32 for dinner. He's a bit overweight, but somehow his three-toned corduroys look just right—even elegant—on him. After all, Boggs fancies himself a good old boy from the bayou, tells Boudreaux jokes (which are to Louisiana what Aggie jokes are to Texas) in a hopeless Cajun accent, begins wearing white suits shortly after Easter, smokes four or five Havana cigars a day (despite the federal ban), and will go anywhere in the world to hunt virtually anything that can be shot and eaten.

"Just write that I'm a pussycat,"

PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN BECKER



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Boggs says with an exaggerated drawl. "It's the God's honest truth." Then he pauses, grins, and bellows, "Ho, ho, ho!"

At the moment, Boggs is glued to the TV, where his sister Cokie Roberts is speaking with considerable horror about the impending meltdown of political Washington caused by various fund-raising scandals engulfing the president, vice president, First Lady, members of the administration, and Congress. Boggs turns away, rolls his piercing emerald eyes, and sighs, "She should know better."

Still, Boggs is worried. He's sure he'll come out O.K., but it seems clearer that the president, his staff, and perhaps several powerful congressmen—Boggs's friends and, in the case of congressional Democrats, his political soul mates—are going to be pilloried by their political opponents and by the media.

On this balmy day in the pre-Lewinsky era, Boggs has no doubts about the resilience of Bill Clinton or the resistance of Congress to enacting meaningful reform of the campaign-finance system. This is a man who recognized Bill Clinton's national potential almost as early as the president himself, raised money tirelessly for his re-election, discussed fund-raising with Al Gore, flew on Air Force One, and analyzed developments with Democratic Party chairman Chris Dodd. Lanny Davis, one of Boggs's former law partners, has served as the president's "counsel for spin control," and 17 other partners have held important posts in the administration (among them Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, Boggs's former partner and protégé, who died in a 1996 plane crash). But here's another key to Boggs's power: over the past 15 years, he has raised money for more congressmen than any other lobbyist.

The success of Thomas Hale Boggs Jr. owes much to pure skill, political acumen—and pedigree. He is the son of Hale Boggs, the legendary House majority leader from Louisiana, and Lindy Boggs, who occupied her husband's congressional seat after his death in 1972 and is now Clinton's ambassador to the Vatican. Experience has taught Boggs that whatever happens in the Clinton White House or in Senator Fred Thompson's fund-raising hearings, Washington life will go on, however shaken the rest of the country may be. He is an expert at the long view.

What Boggs also believes (and what he thinks his sister Cokie should know) is that Washington is not yet in disarray; it's in quite functional shape, and he—as lobbyist, lawyer, fund-raiser, and head of a remarkable political clan—is at its well-organized center.

By eight A.M. the next day, Boggs is at his 10-foot, glass-topped desk in the post-Federal-style office building his law firm occupies on the edge of Georgetown. Shortly after nine, he clips his first Havana of the day and begins taking calls from clients.

Name an industry with a major interest in governmental policy and Patton Boggs—the 275-lawyer firm of which he is one of the two marquee partners—represents it: communications (MCI), oil (Shell), health care (Federation of American Health Systems). Then there are the others: M&M/Mars, the Newspaper Association of America, New York Life, Holiday Inn Worldwide, Sony, the American Bankers Association, ARCO Chemical, Hewlett-Packard. Patton Boggs's list, with more than 220 clients, takes up twice as much space in the directory of Washington lobbyists than that of any other firm. All of them want the same things: legislation, influence, and regulatory action that will bring them greater profits.

Money and lobbying are as familiar to Washington as scandal. From Jefferson's era to Teapot Dome, from Jackson's age to the slush funds of Nixon's Watergate, political Washington has periodically been awash in dirty money and politicians willing to take or deal in it. But until the post-Watergate era, the basic ebb and flow of political power in Washington took place in the marbled Pennsylvania Avenue corridor between the White House and Capitol Hill; money was secondary—though hardly immaterial—to policymaking.

"Just write that I'm a pussycat," Boggs says. "It's the God's honest truth."

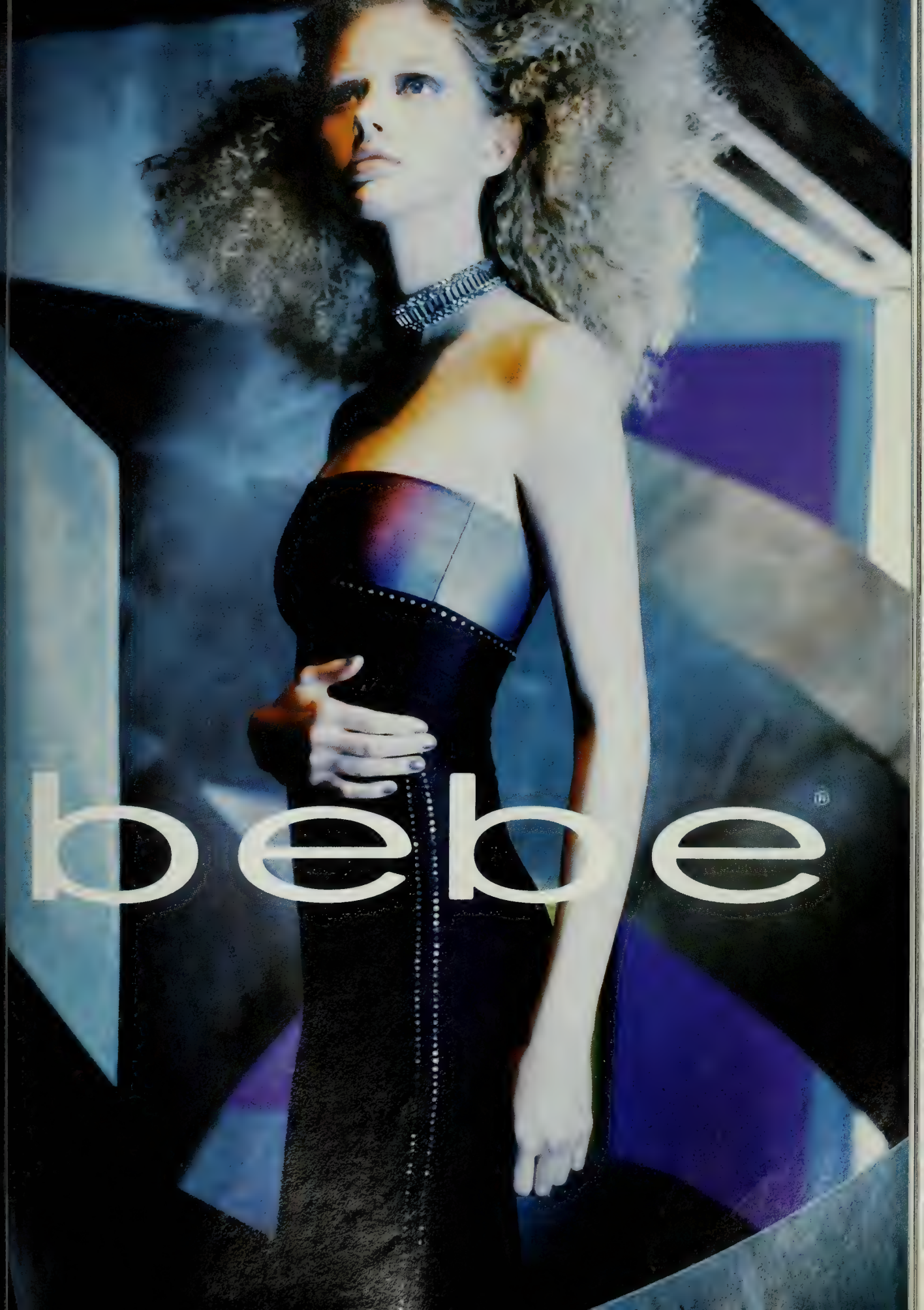
Nothing testifies more poignantly to this antiquated system than the striking political trophy elegantly mounted and displayed on the wall directly across from Tommy Boggs's high-backed chair. It's a collection of 50 pens, each used by Lyndon Johnson to sign a separate piece of Great Society legislation—voting rights, Headstart, Medicare—shepherded through the House by Hale Boggs, a southern gentleman, ingratiating host, deft congressional deal-maker, political power broker, integrationist by conscience, and moderate New Dealer by temperament. And here, it might be said, is where his son's heart still lies. "The job of government," Boggs believes, "is to help the people."

Or so he says. If nothing else, Tommy Boggs is an unusually complex character who embodies a deeply disturbing transformation in how our national polity is organized and run.

Back in what Boggs calls "the old days"—his father's era—lobbying was a kind of sideline in Washington, sometimes little more than a one-man operation. There were wheeler-dealers such as Franklin Roosevelt's political crony Tommy Corcoran, who knew how to make a buck by advancing an interest through the governmental process. There was the ubiquitous Clark Clifford and, on the Republican side, Bryce Harlow, whose office space was paid for by Colgate-Palmolive. "You had," Boggs recalls, "the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. You had trade associations, but not thousands of freelance lobbyists, and not whole public-policy shops." It was only after Watergate, he says, that "there was a total breakdown of the old political order." He adds, "That was just about the time we were taking off as a firm."

In the ensuing years, a new city has grown up along K Street north of Pennsylvania Avenue, stretching from fashionable Georgetown to political downtown. It's composed of gleaming office buildings that sit relatively low to the ground and house more than 100,000 lobbyists, regulatory lawyers, public-policy advocates—and their attendant pollsters, P.R. people, number crunchers, and "grassroots guys" (as Boggs calls them), who organize pressure groups back home to "spontaneously" support a client's positions.

This new infrastructure of corporate special interests may, in fact, wield more real power than the federal bureaucracy itself. At the very least, it dominates the decision-making process in Washington, largely because its members are better organized and better financed than anyone else (and because they are major contributors to political campaigns). Last year, for example, Patton Boggs billed its clients $90 million, more than $20 million of that in direct-lobbying fees; it steered


bebe

millions more to the campaigns of incumbent members of Congress and to the president.

Modern Washington, says former senator Bill Bradley, a Boggs-family friend, "is dominated by money, and money creates political campaigns where the candidate does not go out to meet the voters. He just sits there and raises money. Therefore certain interests—including corporations—are able to marshal huge influence. In Congress you have to raise money at a clip of $25,000 a week and you never define yourself politically. You are everything to everybody. You convince yourself that you are a great politician when, in fact, you are a great tactical manager because you commission polls every week or every day. And to have polls, you have to have money. And without polls you fear that you won't have the advantage over everyone else. It becomes naïve to actually take positions on issues."



BOGGS OF SUMMER Hale Boggs escorts his family down the Capitol steps on July 26, 1947. From left: Lindy, Tommy (aged six), Hale, Barbara, and Cokie (aged three).

"Boggs likes politicians," says fellow lobbyist Wayne Thevenot. "He's one of them. He loves the game."

Except on behalf of contributors. This is where lobbyists such as Boggs come in, flush with campaign cash, advising clients how to cover their bets as if they're dealing with poker chips. Today the odds are stacked high in their favor, and their legislative objectives are increasingly assured.

Ralph Nader, the nemesis of Washington's corporate culture, likens picking the top lobbyists in this atmosphere to picking the hungriest shark. "It's like throwing rare meat into a pool, and 20 big-time sharks fighting over it," he says. "No one asks which shark is more powerful as long as the feeding frenzy continues and more meat—the tax dollar—gets thrown into the pool. All these guys are on the same side—against the public."

Then again, it's almost impossible to find anyone who counts who's ready to say a bad word about Tommy Boggs—on or off the record—even among those who now denounce the system he has done so much to construct. This is unheard of in a city that thrives on gossip and backhanded character assassination. Even Nader agrees that Boggs has modernized and updated the game through a combination of skill, financial leverage, and genuine mastery of the system.

Wayne Thevenot, a former congressional aide and fellow lobbyist from Louisiana, sounds almost reverential about the man at the heart of a system Thevenot claims to find disgusting. "Tom Boggs has a different personality than most lobbyists," he says. "He likes politicians and their company and the way they think." Here Boggs is truly his father's son. "He's one of them. He loves the game."

Lanny Davis adds, "If you write about Tom Boggs as the prototypical lobbyist, you will be missing a big part of him. He's a paradox and contradictory. If you miss the complexity of him, you're missing an important part of the story. Darkness and light, special interests and public interests—it's not that simple."

The tension in Tom Boggs's life can be traced back to his father, Hale Boggs—the desire to do good works (for which Tommy is famous in his private life), the persistent belief that his family's values lend an ennobling presence to his profession. In his social views, Boggs has never abandoned his father's progressive New Deal–Great Society beliefs. The pro bono causes he champions—on behalf of the homeless, against the proposed flag-burning amendment, for indigent criminal defendants and cash-starved cultural institutions—fit the Johnsonian mold.

Patton Boggs, he says, exaggerating only slightly, is "the largest black law firm in America," with about 20 African-American partners, and Boggs's charity work—for individuals he supports out of his pocket and for Washington's Catholic charities, which named him their man of the year in 1996—consumes hours of his workdays. The pride he takes in having saved thousands of jobs through his lobbying work on Congress's Chrysler bailout of 1979—representing Chrysler—falls into the same category, he reasons. So does his claim that Americans deserve congressionally mandated universal health care.

But that's only half the story—the better half. Facing those pens, sitting behind that glass-topped desk too large to reach across, phone receiver trapped between ear and shoulder, Boggs juggles calls from insurance companies determined to


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dismantle Bill Clinton's health-care proposals; communications businesses eager to make sure the government auctions off the most lucrative communications channels of the future with no strings attached; nuclear-energy companies poised for the coming battle of utility deregulation—expected to be one of the biggest windfalls in the history of Washington lobbying, worth hundreds of millions in fees.

In short, Boggs works for corporations hell-bent on creating a 90s-style Great Society, in which the campaign for social reform, from the New Deal to Nixon, will be only a memory. As Charles Lewis of the Center for Public Integrity recently told *The National Journal,* Patton Boggs's "only criteria seems to be whoever walks through the door and has money."

Boggs's reluctant detractors view his success almost with sadness, given his mastery over a system they abhor. Many wish he were in another line of work: public service, specifically.

"I always thought the turning point was when he ran in Maryland for the House in 1970 and lost," the acquaintance says of Boggs's one run for elected office. He detects in Boggs "a deep tension" that "goes back to trying to go the other way first. He tried to go into public service and it didn't work. Being in the House would have put him on a totally different track."

In fact, nothing says more about modern Washington than the fact that Boggs, who has never been elected to anything, is perhaps the most successful politician in Washington (aside from Bill Clinton)—and wields more influence than his father ever did. "The best thing that ever happened to me," Boggs says, "was that I got beat when I ran for Congress."

Tommy Boggs's life, whatever its complexities, has had an almost dreamlike quality to it. Along with Cokie, he is to Washington what Carrie Fisher is to Hollywood. (There was another sister, Barbara, who died of cancer in 1990 while serving as mayor of Princeton, New Jersey.) He was born in Louisiana in 1940—eight days after his father's first successful congressional campaign—but grew up as part of Washington's brat pack. His family's home was constantly filled with the city's most powerful men. "I was interested in politics ever since I can remember," he says. "My sister Barbara used to say that some people have antiques and jewelry around the house, but we had the Kennedys and Humphreys and Rayburns. My old man loved to entertain at home. He'd call at seven and say, 'Lindy, I just ran into four guys on the floor and I'm bringin' 'em home to dinner.' "

In high school, Tommy spent his summers as an elevator operator in the House of Representatives, opening doors for men who would someday open very different kinds of doors for him. Washington served as a cocoon, and as Boggs grew up he showed no desire to shed it. After his elementary-school years at Blessed Sacrament in Chevy Chase, he attended the elite local schools—Georgetown Prep, then Georgetown University and Georgetown Law School. He stuck around even in the summers, working as an intern for Paul Douglas, the famously independent (and scrupulous) Democratic senator from Illinois, who took on an almost paternal role in Tommy's life.

After law school, Boggs received job offers from more than a dozen top Washington law firms ("on the strength of my intellect—ha-ha"). But he rejected all of them and founded his own law firm with Jim Patton, the youngest partner at Covington & Burling, then Washington's top law firm. "I never forgot my father's reaction. I said, 'Dad, I'm going to practice law with a guy named Jim Patton.' He said, 'Who? It doesn't make any sense. You practice law with a major firm in town!' "

Patton Boggs's "only criteria," says Charles Lewis, "seems to be whoever walks through the door and has money."

Boggs started quietly, doing legal work for clients such as the Boating Industry Association. But he recognized from the beginning that, for Hale Boggs's son, lobbying was the way to go. "I had a ridiculous level of self-confidence. Interviewing with a lot of law firms, I quickly saw that they had very little knowledge of how Congress worked. And in those days there were just a handful of lobbyists, anyway—virtually none in any of those firms except for Clark Clifford—so I saw a need, and I knew that I wanted to represent companies with problems in government."

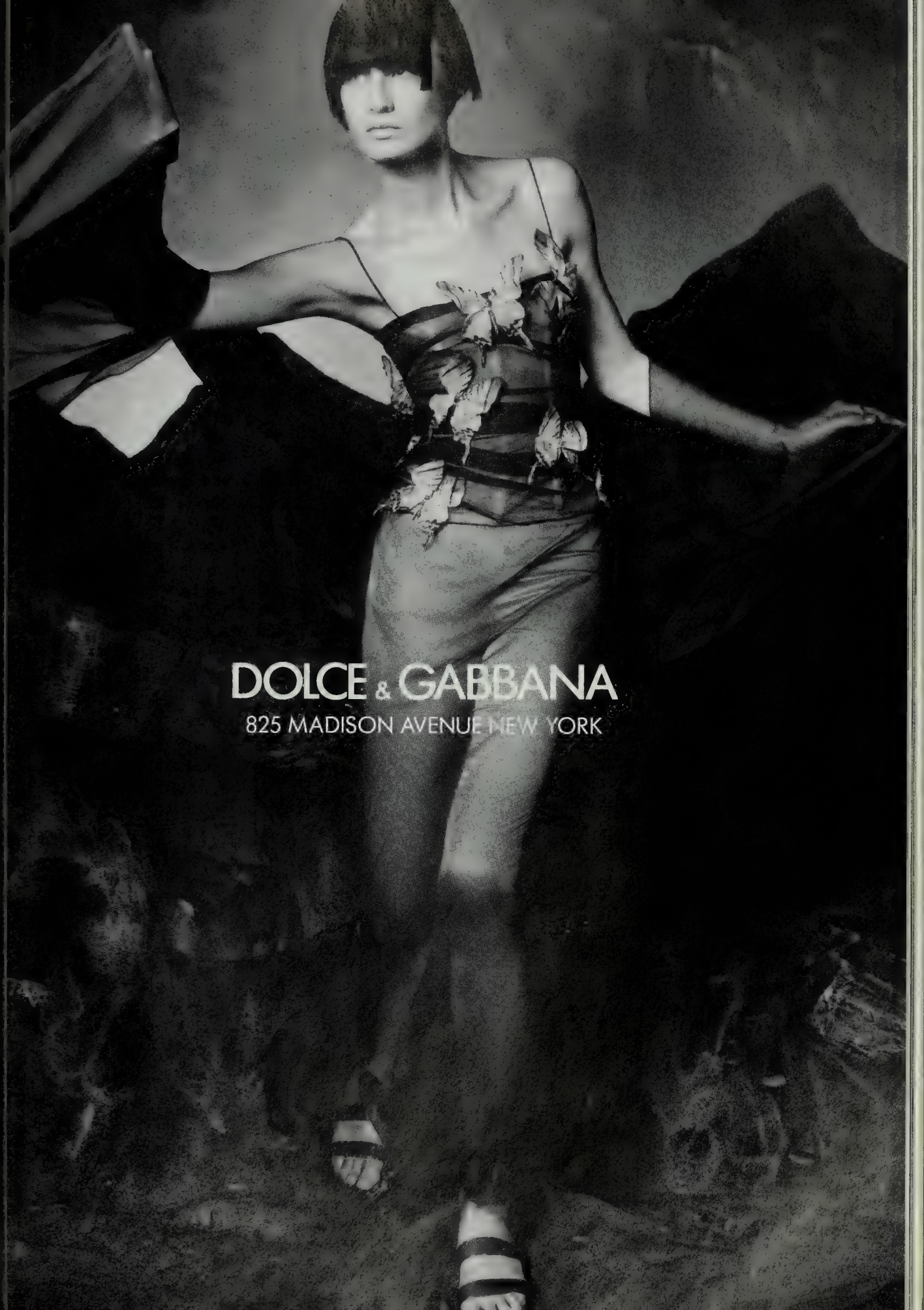
In the early years, when Boggs was establishing himself, he was rocked by the death of his father, whose plane disappeared in Alaska while he was stumping for a House colleague in 1972. When he speaks about this loss, Tom Boggs's lively eyes glaze over and a look of genuine anguish appears on his usually relaxed face. "I was mad," he recalls. "We'd just really gotten to be really good friends. I was also mad he'd done it. He didn't want to take that damn trip no more than a man on the moon—and for a congressman who could have easily gotten reelected." He slows down. "I had a chip on my shoulder for about a year. I wasn't terribly pleasant to be around."

The burden fell on his wife, Barbara, whom he had begun dating when they were 12, and married at 20. Hale and Lindy Boggs had a real partnership—political, social, and emotional. In a different era, so do Tommy and Barbara, who owns a thriving business that plans social and convention events in the capital. They discuss—and argue about—everything, just as the whole Boggs family did on Bradley Boulevard in the 1950s, in the house where Cokie and her husband, journalist Steve Roberts, live today. ("A house that was full of love and conversation," says a friend. "A family with the most highly developed egos of any family I've ever met.")

"Barbara is extraordinarily pragmatic," says their childhood friend Susie Hoskins, who runs a popular catering business in Washington. "With Tommy, you have the guy who dreams up the idea—the artistic person, the marketing person, the promoter. Their lives are a perfectly run operation. Tommy can come and go as he needs during the week and tend to his day job. Come Friday afternoon, he's on his way to his haven, the Eastern Shore, where in the summertime it's water and in the wintertime it's guns."

As in his father's day, entertaining on a grand (yet somehow homey) scale provides emotional and political sustenance—even with 40 for dinner, which Tom usually cooks. "Gloppy food—jambalaya, red beans and rice, plus huge hunks of meat and the ducks that have been shot that day," says Hoskins. "He thrives on it."

A contemplative man who teases but never offends, Boggs uses excess as part of his methodology—the white suits, the constant jokes, the gloppy meals. Just as lobbyist Bob Strauss's exaggerated Texas swagger and sagebrush persona have worked wonders for his clients, Tom


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Boggs wears his heritage with a flair, partly because it stands out in colorless Washington. And partly because it worked for Hale Boggs.

Yet Boggs's celebration of his Louisiana roots is more than mere pragmatism. In a state dotted with Hale Boggs buildings and bridges and Lindy Boggs education centers and gardens, the family is royalty in New Orleans—something akin to what the Kennedys are in Massachusetts. Lindy's house sits behind an exquisite courtyard on Bourbon Street, the honky-tonkiest neighborhood in America. Her son, who sometimes throws major fund-raising bashes at her house, works hard to maintain New Orleans as an identifying locale in his life even though he didn't really grow up in Louisiana.

"He wants to be an authority on New Orleans restaurants, just like he's the authority on everything else—so he can expound," Hoskins says. "He's interested in doing business in Louisiana—any business down here that doesn't get him put in jail."

Lindy Boggs's neighbors include pimps, strippers, druggies, down-and-out musicians, and the lines of tourists waiting for a meal at Galatoire's. "You have to wade through them all to get to the front door of one of the finest houses in the city," says a frequent guest.

Tommy Boggs glories in this human gumbo. On Super Bowl Sunday, awaiting the guests for one of his parties, he is dressed in a white suit and flanked by 300-pound Jefferson Parish sheriff Harry Lee, who was once Hale and Lindy Boggs's campaign chauffeur. Boggs steps outside his mother's house, a Bloody Mary in hand, a smile on his face, offering toasts to the characters on Bourbon Street. He follows their ragged parade with boyish enthusiasm.

"Tommy is Big-Time Charlie," says a close friend. "Everything he does is too much. Too much food, too much expensive wine, too much of a belly. Everything is bursting out, bursting forth."

No other lobbyist entertains with his sense of theater and extravaganza, effortlessly mixing the personal and the political. An invitation to one of his shoots is a Washington rite of passage. Congressmen and captains of industry crouch together in the duck blinds on Boggs's irrigated, state-of-the-art marshland preserve off the Chesapeake, side by side with gun-toting locals, in-laws, and law-firm acolytes. Usually the guy having the best time is Boggs himself.

There was, in the years after his father's death, another event that altered Boggs's life—this time in his all-encompassing congressional family. In the post-Watergate 1970s, as Patton Boggs steadily grew, the rules of the Washington game changed. In a wave of reform, Congress passed new "sunshine" regulations that eliminated closed committee hearings and the automatic seniority system for House- and Senate-committee chairmanships. This helped curtail Congress's "buddy system" (as Boggs calls it) of secret favors exchanged by powerful leaders. ("You know, 'You vote for my dairy program in Vermont and I'll vote for your sugar program in Louisiana.'")

Now much more of the legislative process was out in the open, and special interests—from organized labor to the steel industry—couldn't count on a few powerful old men to organize votes on their behalf. At the same time, in 1974, Congress adopted strict new campaign-reform laws; instead of going to the Speaker or the minority leader for campaign funds channeled from large corporate or labor coffers, Boggs says, "members of Congress had to go out and raise money from lots and lots of people." No longer would "the Speaker of the House simply say, 'Take care of this young congressman from Texas—he's very good on your issues, Gulf Oil Company.' Now the guy has to call 15,000 people to raise $1.5 million, which is the cost of most contested House races."

Enter the political-action committees, used by lobbyists largely to bundle campaign contributions. Suddenly politicians were depending on lobbyists to raise their campaign money. The Watergate reforms, as *Wall Street Journal* reporter Brooks Jackson has written, "turned what had once been a subter-



HOUSE FATHER
Representative Leslie Arends shows new House majority whip Hale Boggs how to crack it, January 12, 1962; Hale with presidential candidate John F. Kennedy in Los Angeles, July 15, 1960; Lindy, with Tommy at her side, talks to Alaska governor William Egan after Hale's plane disappeared, October 17, 1972.

The Boggs family is royalty in New Orleans—something akin to what the Kennedys are in Massachusetts.


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ranean trickle of special interest money into a roaring cascade." And the new shadow government of lobbyists soon engorged K Street.

That was when Tommy Boggs came into his own as a lobbyist. In the 1980s, following his crucial work on the Chrysler bailout, his mastery over the Democratic Congress became one of the basic legislative realities of Washington. He accomplished this, in part, by pioneering some of the agressive fund-raising techniques that would, on a far larger scale, lead to the current White House scandals. "You have got to make the contributions if you are going to compete in the congressional and regulatory marketplace," says Boggs, acknowledging that those who can't afford to pay seven-figure lobbying fees are increasingly shut out of the political process.

Meanwhile, lost in the headlines about the president's fund-raising, is an essential truth: the real culprits—who regularly deliver votes and favors for major campaign contributors—are the members of Congress. "Unless an issue will defeat a congressman, he'll vote for a contributor every time unless it will be embarrassing to folks back home," says Charles Lewis. "Usually the folks back home don't know about it. It will be on some issue that a corporate entity wants that's on page 823 of some elaborate bill."

The campaigns of more than half the Democrats in Congress have been bolstered by the fund-raisers Boggs hosts. Still, he professes a certain distaste for the fund-raising that has been so important to him. "Too much time is spent raising money, and lobbyists play too important a function in that regard," he wrote in a 1993 *New York Times* op-ed piece. Today, he adds, "It would be a relief, frankly, to take some of the pressure off having to raise as much money as campaigning now requires."

Each election year, partners at Patton Boggs discreetly contribute hundreds of thousands of dollars of their own money to congressional candidates, most of them incumbents. Conveniently, half the firm's partners are Republicans, among them the former counsels to Bob Dole, the Republican National Committee, and the Christian Coalition. (After the 1994 election, the firm entered into a client-sharing agreement with the powerful G.O.P. consulting firm of Hecht, Spencer & Associates.)

Not surprisingly, Patton Boggs has figured in Bill Clinton's campaign fund-raising. Its partners personally contributed at least $100,000 in 1996, exponentially more if you count the contributions raised through clients and their PACs. (Tom and Barbara Boggs have regularly opened their own pocketbooks, donating at least $500,000 to Democratic congressional and presidential campaigns in the past decade. For the record, Boggs estimates his net worth at "under $10 million.")

All of this fund-raising and contributing has been accomplished in complicated ways devised by Boggs and other lobbyists to circumvent the intent of the 1974 campaign laws—which were meant to limit the opportunities for big corporations, unions, and other lobbying entities to influence congressional votes and White House policies with their money. Still, Boggs insists that "the perception that money buys a lot in D.C. is way overblown."

"Too much time is spent raising money," Boggs has written, "and lobbyists play too important a function in that regard."

By his own estimate, Boggs raised at least $600,000 in so-called "soft money" for the D.N.C. during the last presidential campaign through personal solicitations or by hosting fund-raising events. That doesn't include another $100,000 he persuaded his client MCI to add to its total contributions in late 1995.

This solicitation was especially well timed, for it came just as the Clinton/D.N.C. campaign was in dire need of money for television advertising. MCI was then in the midst of a battle with other telecommunications giants over who would get what share of future business under the Telecommunications Act that President Clinton finally signed into law in 1996. (MCI has paid Patton Boggs an estimated $1.5 million for its work.)

Such strategic contributions to both political parties are not exceptional under the campaign-finance system that has evolved over the past 20 years. It's a system in which money is often given by corporations, unions, and trade associations not necessarily in expectation of any immediate quid pro quo, but as a kind of protection money—the prevailing sensibility in Washington being (in the words of one insider): "We may not necessarily help you if you contribute, but we certainly won't be out to hurt you."

Boggs says he personally donates to and raises money for as many as 125 politicians during a campaign cycle—usually by hosting small $1,000- to $5,000-a-head dinners and cocktail parties—and his partners help perhaps another 50 candidates financially. "I've never been known as a big fund-raiser," Boggs adds, somewhat overmodestly, considering the contributions he helps steer from his clients toward congressmen and the president. Indeed, members of his firm sent some contributors to those infamous $50,000-a-cup White House coffees. "If you give me credit for the Trial Lawyers Association, that's $4 million right there," Boggs says, noting that—unlike Patton Boggs—other firms have their own PACs, through which they contribute a percentage of partners' fees. "In fact, I don't think any firm does as many fund-raisers as we do."

Few lobbyists make as much money as Boggs. He charges about $550 an hour and has clients begging him for more time. Even at these prices, his fingerprints are all over town. A partial list of clients he handles personally—the Dole Food Company, G.E. Capital Services, the Major League Baseball Players Association, MCI, American Express—is impressive by any standard, and he holds on to these clients in an increasingly competitive lobbying atmosphere.

Despite his professed interest in progressive legislation, Boggs has spent much of his career working for clients eager to exploit the deregulative atmosphere of the 80s and 90s. His representation of MCI on the telecommunications bill of 1996 ultimately helped earn tens of millions of windfall dollars for the company (while its customers were the last to realize any cost benefits). Last year Boggs was paid $200,000 by the Smokeless Tobacco Council to help chewing-tobacco and snuff manufacturers fight anti-tobacco legislation. In the kind of gesture he considers conciliatory, Boggs recently persuaded Congress and regulators to hand over a federal building and government land in California to his client, Pacific Lumber. In return, Pacific agreed not to CONTINUED ON PAGE 187

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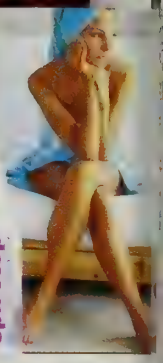
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 184 hack down stands of ancient redwood trees.

That's just for starters. Boggs's firm has represented former Haitian dictator Baby Doc Duvalier, the Zairean and Guatemalan governments, and the sheikh of Abu Dhabi in his internecine dispute with the fraudulent B.C.C.I. banking empire, which was partially funded by his kingdom. The Abu Dhabi government has paid Patton Boggs more than $5 million in legal and lobbying fees, and other Middle Eastern governments—Jordan, Oman, Qatar, the Emirates—are among the firm's biggest accounts.

"Baby Doc was strictly Ron Brown's client," Boggs says, passing the blame to his dead partner. "If we had it to do over again and had known the complications of Haiti, we would have rejected it." Clearly, this subject makes Boggs uncharacteristically jumpy.



FAMILY AFFAIRS
From left: ABC reporter Cokie Roberts and her husband, journalist Steve Roberts, at the Washington Correspondents' Dinner, April 26, 1997; Barbara, Tommy, and his mother, Lindy, attend a dinner at the Library of Congress, 1995; Lindy, Gerald Ford, and Tommy at the Truman Awards dinner in Washington, October 25, 1995.

"The world has changed a lot—nobody around is representing New Deal/Great Society–type programs," says Cokie Roberts, defending her brother, to whom she is very close. "The buzzwords today are 'private-public partnership,' and actually my father was involved in that concept."

Boggs knows how to play the system for his clients as well as anyone. Lanny Davis says, "You can give a million dollars to a member of Congress, [but] if you ask him to vote on something that is going to cause him to be defeated in the next election, he won't do it. Boggs never asks you to do anything that is going to hurt you." Several members of Congress, as ideologically different as liberal-Democratic representative Lee Hamilton of Indiana and conservative-Republican senator John McCain of Arizona, agree that Boggs's political finesse is unparalleled on Capitol Hill. And at the White House, the genuine affection for Boggs is as palpable as it is on the Hill.

Like many of the new generation of lobbyists, Boggs traffics in information. He is an expert at gathering it from and for clients—information about how individual bills will affect a congressman's constituents, about who will be the next session's key chairmen and ranking members of committees. "His dad gave him that aura," Davis says. "But if you followed him around when he was lobbying an issue and compared him to other lobbyists of his station and rank, you'd be amazed at how substantive he is when he's talking to staff." This is an increasingly valuable quality in the Newt Gingrich Congress, where lobbyists sometimes literally dictate the content of bills to congressional aides.

"Baby Doc Duvalier was strictly Ron Brown's client," Boggs says, passing the blame to his dead partner.

Boggs is convinced that, for a lobbyist, controlling information is more crucial than twisting arms, salving egos, or simply handing over campaign contributions—that it is, in fact, the most important part of modern lobbying technique. "Tommy gets information by allowing you to assume that he already knows what he wants to find out," says someone who has watched it happen numerous times. "He convinces you he knows something and then you get to talking about it and you end up telling him what he wants to know."

In today's environment in which faith in government—and hence the information government provides—is collapsing, the lobbyist with seemingly trustworthy information is in an enviable position. "Now," Boggs says, "I can provide from industry sources quicker, more accurate, computerized information on a given issue than an administration agency."

When Boggs set up shop, there were fewer than 100 registered lobbyists in Washington. Today there are 10,000. Anyone's list of the most powerful would include Vernon Jordan, President Clinton's good friend and chairman of his transition team; Bob Strauss of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld (also Jordan's firm); Burl Bernhard and Harry McPherson (L.B.J.'s former White House counsel) of Verner, Liipfert, Bernhard, McPherson and Hand; Lloyd Cutler, who served briefly as President Clinton's counsel; Jack Valenti, who has represented Hollywood in Washington since he left the Johnson administration; and Republicans Charls Walker, Tom Korologos, and William Timmons. Then there are the congressional leaders turned lobbyists, including former senators Howard Baker, Paul Laxalt, and Warren Rudman, and even the disgraced Bob Packwood, who seems to have landed on his feet on K Street. All are part of the bipartisan revolving door through which power and money flow in Washington.

Still, even the most jaded Washington observers seem shocked that the tobacco

industry, which last year paid lobbyists $30 million, was able to hire Baker, whose first wife died of lung cancer; former Texas governor Ann Richards, a recovering alcoholic; and former Senate majority leader George Mitchell, a onetime icon of good government. All are paid huge fees to persuade Congress and the White House to accept the $368.5 billion settlement negotiated by the tobacco industry and state attorneys general in order to limit future liability claims by smokers.

In addition to its congressional contacts, Patton Boggs has an unusually close relationship with the executive branch: former partners hold mid- to high-level posts in almost every corner of the Clinton administration. "I regret I have but one law firm to give to my country," Boggs says. (In fact, the firm's conflict-of-interest rules prohibit it from directly lobbying former partners.) Most of all, Boggs seems to have inherited the most persuasive qualities of his father—the good-old-boy charm, the intellect, the restraint, the aura of power. "Vernon Jordan is extremely powerful because of his relationship with the president," says Charles Lewis, one of Boggs's chief adversaries. "But Boggs is Boggs, and he stays at the top no matter who is president. Boggs transcends presidents because of who his family is."

In organizing his lobbying campaigns, particularly those aimed at stopping legislation and regulations unpalatable to his clients, Boggs understands one thing above all else and makes powerful use of it. "For every issue," he says, "there are 10 constituency groups that are well funded, and in that environment it's mighty hard to get 218 votes in the House for passage or 60 in the Senate"—the number needed to defeat a filibuster. He has honed the lobbyist's tool of coalition-building among constituencies, corporations, and industries—ones with often wildly different agendas that happen to coincide only on the matter in question.

In the lobbying struggle over the president's health-care package, for example, between $100 million and $300 million was spent by special interests in favor of or opposed to the legislation. As it often does when working with a coalition, Patton Boggs took on a number of clients with stakes in the health-care industry, all of which were opposed to the plan. (Boggs says his firm's fees related to health care totaled between $2 million and $3 million.) On behalf of the trial lawyers, Boggs persuaded the Judiciary Committee to insert an amending line that would kill the Clinton administration's plan to cap the cost of malpractice lawsuits and thus bring down the cost of health care.

"I think what killed the health program in Congress was just the size of it"—not lobbying, Boggs argues.

Perhaps the most telling of Boggs's actions on health care was the simple fact that he did not offer his services to Bill Clinton—a president he helped elect—on the most important initiative of his administration.

Boggs does not disagree with those who criticize the appalling lack of legislative achievement in the post-Watergate era, but he chooses his words carefully: "There is no question that there has been a lack of effective leadership at both the presidential and congressional levels. But the quality of the individual members of the House and Senate is not nearly so bad as a lot of people think. Most of them do a pretty good job."

Perhaps for business reasons as much as personal inclination, Boggs portrays them almost as victims of the system, pressed for time because of fund-raising demands and subjected to savage intrusions into their personal and professional lives by a hostile press. He says they are tending effectively to their constituents' home-based interests at the expense, unfortunately, of maintaining a national vision, and have been constrained since the Reagan years by budgetary limitations—as if those limitations had nothing to do with their own fiscal irresponsibility.

"The quality of the members of the House and Senate is not nearly so bad as people think," Boggs says. "Most do a pretty good job."

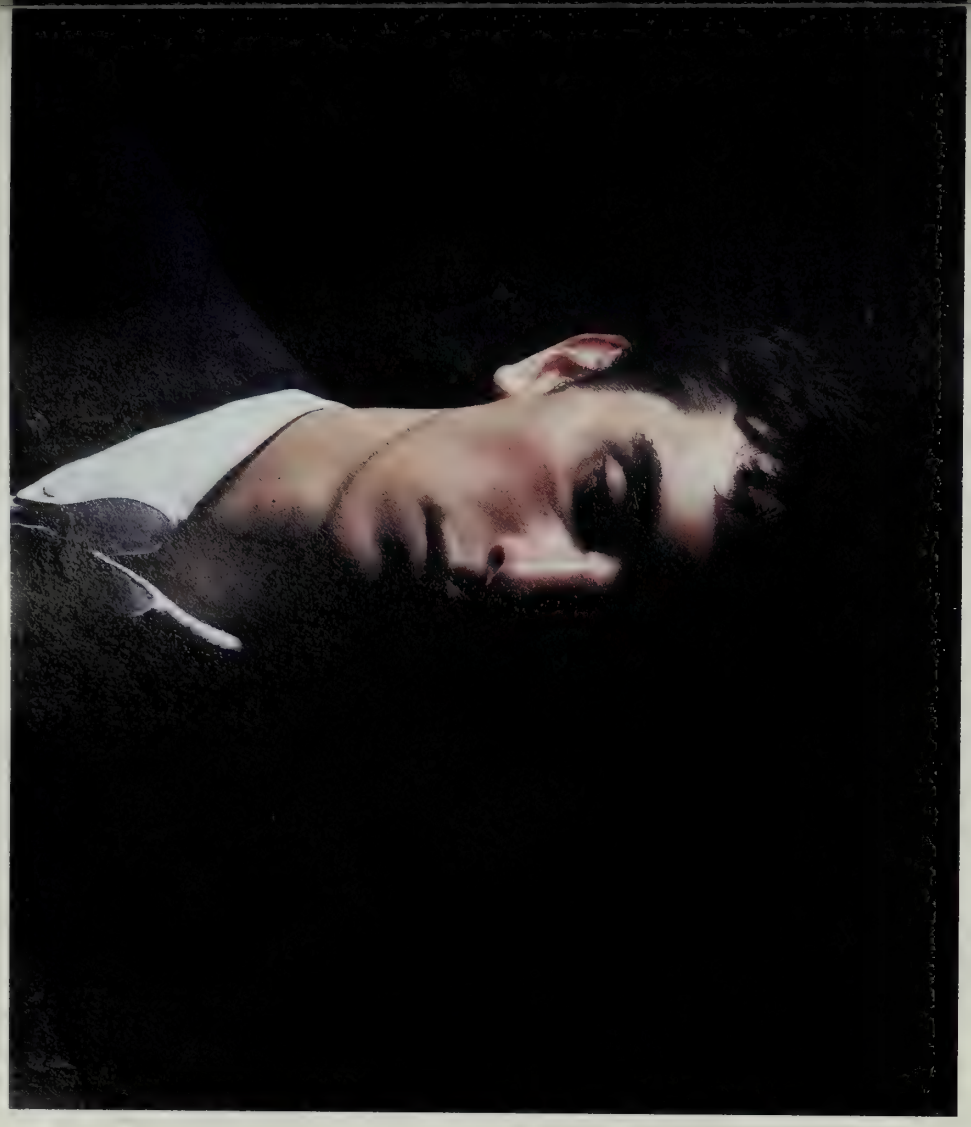
In fact, the questions that Congress and the federal bureaucracy *have* been addressing relate to various kinds of relief, favors, profit incentives, subsidies, set-asides, and giveaways—usually to corporations and contributors with the most convincing lobbying efforts behind their causes. The cumulative effect has been to redirect congressional and federal purpose away from the more difficult problems of the country—infrastructure, education, housing, crime—and toward transforming Washington into a kind of business clearinghouse.

Regardless of which constituent groups or special interests win on specific legislative and regulatory matters, the players who always make out are the ones who permanently reside in Washington: the growing army of lobbyists, lawyers, pollsters, telemarketers, and other influence peddlers who are roughly in the same position as Wall Street brokers during a boom market: they collect on every transaction, and Tommy Boggs collects more than most.

If you were to attend his garden parties, where the mighty of Washington hug and kiss, you would recognize the representatives of the old Washington as well as the new: senators *and* pollsters, journalists *and* P.R. types, Cabinet members *and* telemarketers, congressmen *and* lobbyists, all mixing as easily as the Rayburns, Humphreys, and Kennedys once did in Hale and Lindy Boggs's dining room.

You might also recognize Tommy Boggs's children, whose occupations are telling. In the Great Society tradition, daughter Elizabeth works for a United Nations agency aiding the poor of Latin America. Meanwhile, over at the K Street offices of Swidler & Berlin is Douglas Boggs, Tommy's younger son, a lawyer in his own right. Not surprisingly, Tommy's older son, Thomas Hale Boggs III, is also a lawyer, but has taken what might at first seem an uncharacteristic step for the Boggs clan. He has migrated to Los Angeles, where he works for Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, which caters to political, banking, and entertainment clients.

It makes a peculiar kind of sense. In the last 20 years—Tommy Boggs's heyday—political Washington has increasingly resembled Hollywood. The two cities now seem almost caricatures of each other, each dominated by an elite of a hundred or so men and precious few women. Both are one-industry towns consumed with deal-making and "the gross." Four Zip Codes in the D.C. area—one of the country's richest regions, fueled by the K Street boom—now have a higher median income than Beverly Hills 90210. Tommy Boggs, to stretch the analogy not unreasonably, is now to Washington what Michael Ovitz was to Hollywood (before his recent troubles at Disney). He has refashioned the town, helped build a hugely successful new industry, is renowned for his integrity, and he's a terrific guy. And that's the good news. □





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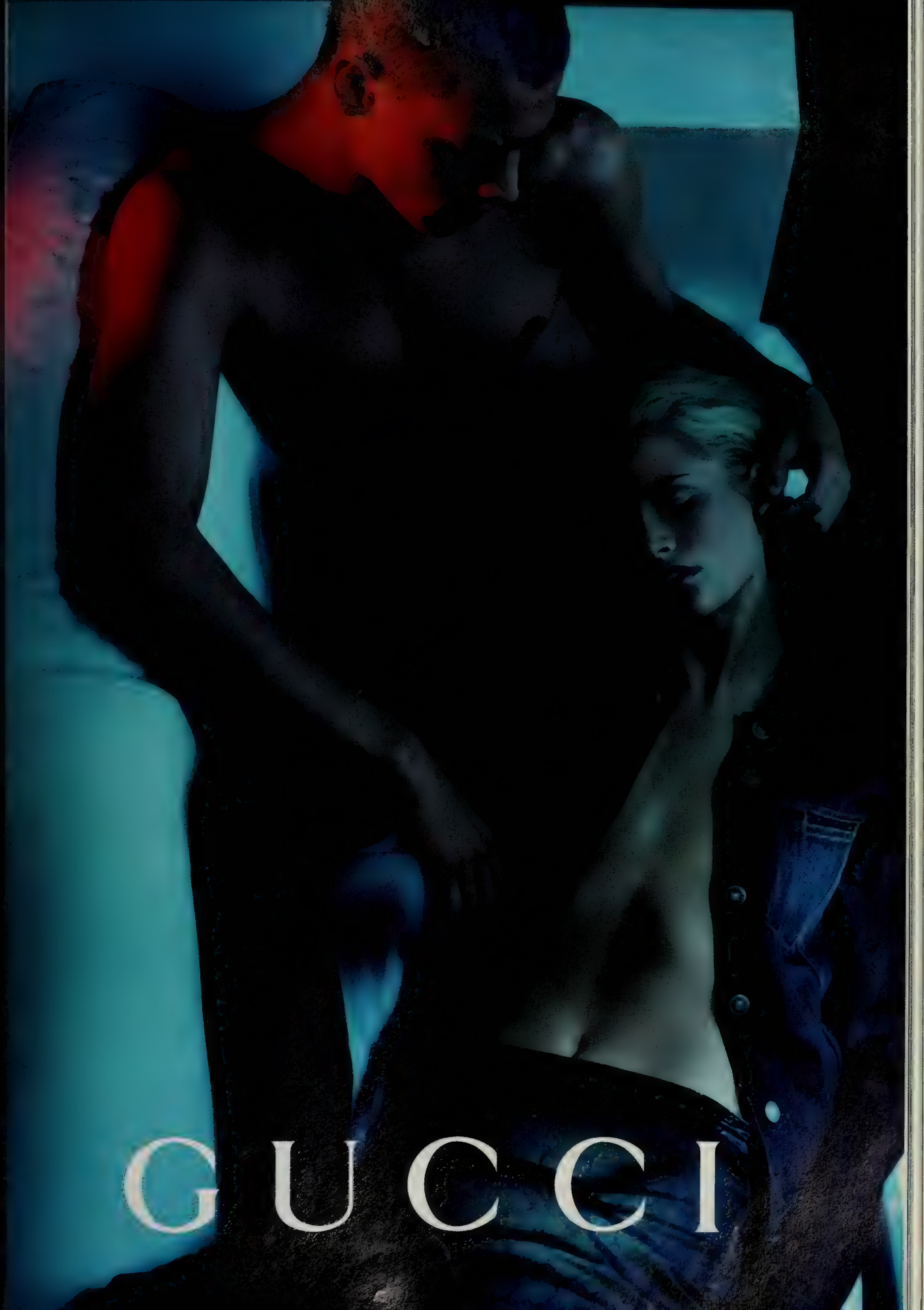
BELLA FRANCESCA

Name and occupation: Francesca Neri, actress. **Provenance:** Trento, Italy. **Age:** 33. **Has inspired memories of Bardot and Loren in:** *Pensavo Fosse Amore Invece Era un Calesse,* directed by Massimo Troisi, *Las Edades de Lulú,* directed by Bigas Luna, and *¡Dispara!,* starring Antonio Banderas. **Your latest film is *Live Flesh,* directed by Pedro Almodóvar. Describe for us the Almodóvar experience, from an actor's perspective:** "As a friend, he's really funny and congenial, but he's a completely different man when he's a director. He's really exigent and wants to control every single thing. So it's wonderful to work with him, but very difficult." **You've worked with Antonio Banderas, a man of legendary charm. Did you fall prey to his wiles?** "I like him as a person, but American women *really* like this kind of man. I don't know why. I think he's so successful because he likes to seduce everybody, men and women. It's incredible."




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Pre-nuptially Yours

A speculative draft of the Streisand-Brolin pre-nup

Ms. Barbara Streisand
Barwood Films
330 West 58th Street
New York, N.Y. 10019

Hello?!?!? BARBRA

Dear Ms. Streisand:

Enclosed is the preliminary proposal for the pre-nuptial agreement between yourself and Mr. James Brolin.

We were able to translate nearly all of your requests into a form of "legalese," as you put it. Please be assured that none of your requests "seemed strange," as you feared. We are always excited by the challenge of turning even the slightest, most ethereal caprice into a binding contract enforceable by law.

Only one of your requests is not yet included in this proposal, as to which we shall need further clarification; to wit:

Section 4, Article vi. (Community Property)
Did Mr. Brolin actually say, "Thank God you got rid of that Art Deco stuff" or was that comment to be used as an example of behavior to be prohibit...

Please make any notes and/or chan...
free to contact this office wi...

Very tru...

what if he finds out about the thing with Tony Danza?

PRE-NUPTIAL AGREEMENT/DRAFT 11

AGREEMENT made this ___ day of _____, 1998, by and between BARBRA STREISAND ("First Party"), residing at _____, California, and JAMES BROLIN ("Second Party"), residing at _____, California.

WITNESSETH:

1. First Party shall be held in no way liable for any potential injury to or disfigurement of the body of the Second Party which results from contact with the fingernails of the First Party.

2. Second Party shall be held liable for any injury or disfigurement of the fingernails of the First Party resulting from contact with the body of the Second Party.

3. Second Party shall make no claim on, nor show any degree of distaste for, the material possessions of the First Party. If the Second Party wishes to import anything into the residence(s) of the First Party, pending Second Party must obtain written consent from the First Party, pending First Party's approval of a photograph of the item and a third-party statement of authentication and/or relevance to the collection of the First Party.

4. Should contract be terminated, Second Party shall make no attempt to contact, for any reason whatsoever, and shall f...cibly decline contact with the following persons: Elliott Gould, Jor... Andre Agassi, Lon Johnson, Peter Jennings, Pierre Trudeau.

5. Second Party's wardrobe shall be provided ... items exclusive of those made by Ms. Karan ... ably incinerated prior to contract closing ... minated, Second Party shall forfeit any ar... right to purchase or wear any wardrobe it...

6. Second Party agrees that should Ms. ... and Second Party appear in advertisemen... First Party holds exclusive right of d...



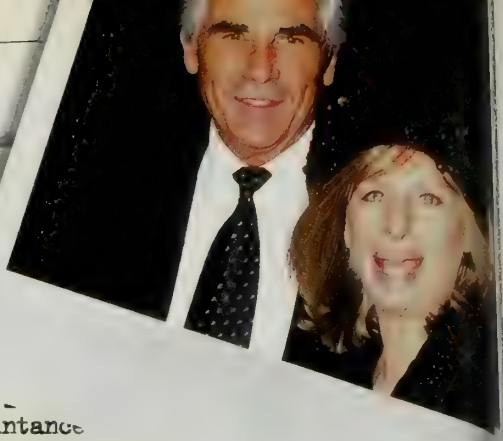
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 198)

In a past life I was a philosopher
who believed the sun was carried across the sky
on the back of a large turtle.



It was pure, glacial spring water.





Make sure he can't get his hands on my Tamaras!!!

7. Second Party shall obtain knowledge and appreciation
life of artist Tamara de Lempicka prior to contract cl
make display of such knowledge and appreciation no fe
five (5) times a week for the duration of contract.

8. Should marriage contract be terminated before January
Second Party shall make no claims on First Party's acquaintance
William Jefferson Clinton and Hillary Rodham Clinton. Should the con
be terminated after January 20th, 2001, no such restriction shall apply.

Hello! what if Hillary wins in 2000?! Change that to year 2009 just in case!

9. Should contract be terminated after:
(a) five (5) years or less of closing, Second Party shall receive no more and no less than a bedroom suite of reproduction Gustav Stickley furniture and an autographed photo of First Party.
(b) more than five (5) but not more than ten (10) years of closing, Second Party shall receive no more and no less than bedroom and living-room suites of authentic Gustav Stickley furniture and an autographed three-sheet of *Funny Girl*.
(c) more than ten (10) but not more than twenty (20) years of closing, Second Party shall receive no more and no less than the aforementioned suites of authentic Gustav Stickley furniture, an authentic Tiffany "Spiderweb" lamp, a 1934 Dodge Roadster with rumble seat, and a set of mauve Wamsutta bath and hand towels, monogrammed "BJS."
Any and all other claims on the estate of the First Party are void.

10. In the event that the First Party wishes to divest herself of any article(s) from her collection(s), Second Party hereby swears to attest to both the monetary and aesthetic worth of the item(s) in all forms of media (in all print, radio, television, electronic, digital, and all other media now or hereafter known or discovered). Con
event that the First Party wishes to promot
magazine or television story. Se
photographed with the
cacious to

14. Second Party shall refrain from referring to his syndicated television series, *Pensacola: Wings of Gold*, or the film *The Amityville Horror* in the presence of the First Party if any other party is present. Second Party shall refrain from referring to the film *The Main Event* in the presence of the First Party if any other party is present. Second Party shall refrain from referring to *What's Up, Doc?* as a funny film. Second Party's response to any query about the film *What's Up, Doc?* should be limited to the observation "If Barbra had directed, it would have been funny."

15. Second Party represents and warrants that he is fully conversant with the receipt figures of all record-album sales and film and concert grosses of the First Party since 1963.

16. Second Party agrees that, due to the schedule and intense concentration required by the career of the First Party, any and all responsibilities for overseeing correspondence of the Official Barbra Streisand Fan Club (B.S.F.C.), including autographing photos, producing handwritten thank-you notes, and writing politely dismissive responses to love letters, shall be his. Any B.S.F.C. correspondence received that is of an explicit sexual nature, including but not limited to photographic material, must be forwarded immediately to First Party, in order that it may be turned over to the proper authorities.

17. Second Party swears to promulgate the notion that offspring of the First Party are as attractive and talented as any offspring of the Second Party, if not more so.

18. If asked by any press in any form of media (in all print, radio, television, electronic, digital, and all other media now or hereafter known or discovered), to comment on First Party's conduct with regard to this contract or any other aspect of First Party's personal conduct, Second Party's response is limited to the following statement: "First Party is not a control freak. First Party is a perfectionist."

Shouldn't the P be capitalized

—DAVID COLMAN



Pack your bags.

And your puffs. Your lines. Your under-eye circles.

It's time to send them on their merry way.

With a little help from new All About Eyes.

This unusual and very targeted mix of botanicals and special ingredients helps firm, even diminish the look of puffs and circles. Actually reduces the tell-tale signs of late nights, long days, time's effects.

Visibly brightens eye-area shadows as it invisibly strengthens skin's moisture barrier, protecting against future damage.

Sends under-eye baggage a message that's short and extremely sweet:

Hit the road. See ya later. Hasta la vista.

Oh... and don't bother to write.

Clinique.

Allergy Tested. 100% Fragrance Free.

www.clinique.com

Hot Type



The violent murder of a black civil-rights activist in the Mississippi Delta and the Kafkaesque undertaking of producing a big Hollywood movie about the tragedy collide in **WILLIE MORRIS'S** *The Ghosts of Medgar Evers* (Random House).

Also this month: One venerable institution celebrates another in **GORE VIDAL'S** *The Smithsonian Institution* (Random House), a surreal gambol through American history and culture. To mark the centenary of artist Alexander Calder, his grandson **ALEXANDER S. C. ROWER** is publishing rare and archival photos in *Calder Sculpture* (Universe); *Calder at Home* (Stewart, Tabori & Chang), by photographer **PEDRO E. GUERRERO,** shows the artist's bent for turning prosaic domestic tools like wastebaskets, soup ladles, and light fixtures into *objets d'art.* Abolitionist John Brown is the hero of **RUSSELL BANKS'S** *Cloudsplitter* (HarperCollins), a powerful reimagination of the raid on the armory at Harpers Ferry. **DAVID DARY'S** *Red Blood & Black Ink* (Knopf) is a double-barreled look at the shoot-'em-up journalism of the Old West. **BARBARA GOLDSMITH'S** *Other Powers* (Knopf) peels back the veil from the Victorian era's most notorious spiritualist and suffragette, Victoria Woodhull. In **ANNE O. FAULK'S** first novel, *Holding Out* (Simon & Schuster), the women of America boycott the baser pleasures until a prominent chief justice of the Supreme Court and wife-beater is brought to his knees. **IAIN PEARS'S** *An Instance of the Fingerpost* (Riverhead) is an Eco-esque page-turner about a macabre murder at Oxford in the 1660s. In *Making History* (Random House) clever Englishman **STEPHEN FRY** ponders the seemingly not so hilarious and troubling question: What if Hitler had never been born? **LARRY GELBART'S** *Laughing Matters* (Random House) is a miscellany of chuckles from the creator of *M*A*S*H.* Young gun of the Brit-crit gang **SIMON REYNOLDS'S** *Generation Ecstasy* (Little, Brown) delves into the hedonistic depths of the musical subculture of electronic dance music, raves, and euphoric drugs. In *Clement Greenberg* (Scribner), **FLORENCE RUBENFELD** sketches the life of one of America's most influential and controversial art critics and grand champion of the New York School of painting. *Nobody Knows the Truffles I've Seen* (Knopf) is the life-in-a-nutshell story of restaurateur *extraordinaire* **GEORGE LANG. GIANNI VERSACE'S** *The Art of Being You* (Abbeville) was compiled by pals to illustrate how artistic sources as diverse as Picasso, Hockney, and Lichtenstein influenced the designer's style. **ROBERT A. F. THURMAN,** the first American Tibetan Buddhist monk (and father of the transcendent Uma), writes a handbook on enlightenment in *Inner Revolution: The Politics of Enlightenment* (Riverhead). Danger-loving journalist **LESLIE COCKBURN** has broken bread with the Cali cartel, marched with the Khmer Rouge, thwarted a Kurdish war, taken on the tobacco lobby, and lived to tell the horrifying tales in her ripping collection of war stories, *Looking for Trouble* (Anchor). Hello, Mattel? Can't you make a Barbie like that?

—ELISSA SCHAPPELL



bloomingdale's

www.thesak.com

Leapin' Lederhosen



The cast of The Sound of Music: *Ashley Rose Orr, Sara Zelle, Andrea Bowen, Ryan Hopkins, Tracy Alison Walsh, Rebecca Luker (as Maria Rainer), Matthew Ballinger, and Natalie Hall.*

"It's like visiting a dear old friend," says director Susan Schulman about why audiences might be compelled to see a Broadway revival. The old friend in this case is *The Sound of Music,* Rodgers and Hammerstein's last collaboration, which will open on March 12 at the Martin Beck Theater, featuring veteran musical star Rebecca Luker (last seen in *Show Boat*) and Shakespearean actor Michael Siberry in his Broadway musical debut. "When I do a revival, I try to do it as if it's never been done before," says Schulman, which is probably just as well, seeing as she's dealing with something of an American institution—the original (and only other) Broadway production (1959) ran for 1,443 performances, and the movie (1965) ranks (adjusted for current dollars) second only to *Gone with the Wind* in box-office gross.

Though it's been described as "an uncomfortably sweet show" and dubbed "The Sound of Mucus," Schulman, who directed *The Secret Garden* on Broadway, sees it differently and has chosen to embrace the show's complexities—the lightness as well as the shadows. "There's lots of teeth here," Schulman says. "There's a very loving heart at the center of *The Sound of Music,* absolutely, but there's also a dark side to that heart."

As for Maria, played in the past most famously by Mary Martin and Julie Andrews, Schulman allows for her sense of humor and independent nature, but also points out that the character has real struggles and must "exorcise her demons." Overall, *The Sound of Music* is, Schulman says, cathartic. "You come out feeling, Yes, O.K., I can do it. If they can climb over that mountain into Switzerland, you know, I can face my next problem." The show that produced such unforgettables as "My Favorite Things" and "Do-Re-Mi" may be moodier now, but its irrepressible sweetness is timeless, and bound to please. Kind of like an old friend.

—BETSEY OSBORNE

Night-Table Reading



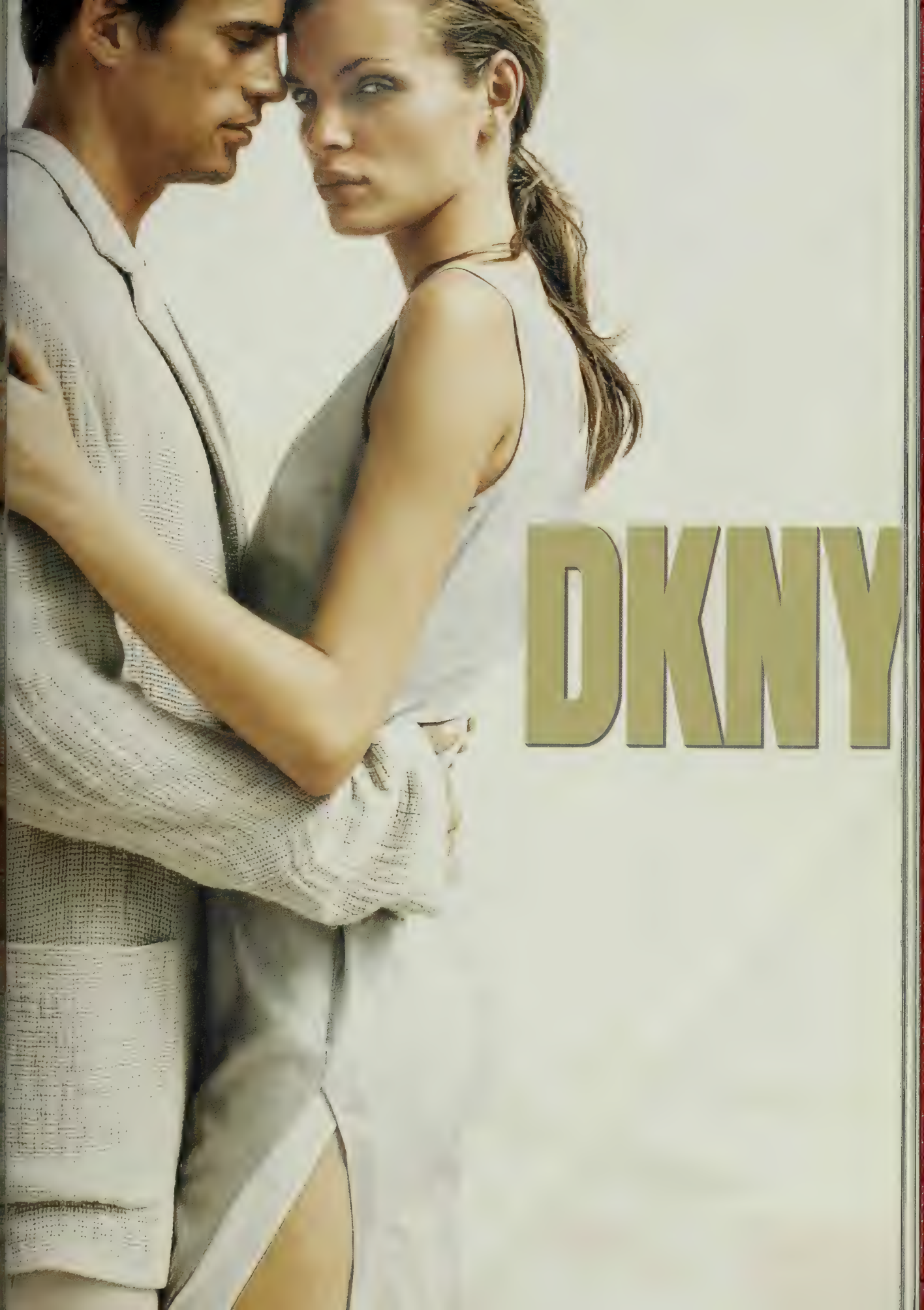
Isaac Hayes, *voice of Chef:* South Park: A New Slant on Life, *by L. Ron Hubbard (Bridge Publications). "It polishes your life like polishing tarnished silver, which makes your perspective on life brighter and your course of survival positive and clearer."*



Dancin' Larry, *New York Rangers [illegible]* Private Parts *by Howard Stern (Pocket Books). "It's one of the funniest [illegible] I've ever read. It's pure gold. He doesn't beat around the bush, and he tells it like it is."*



Marie-Anne Oudejans, *Tocca designer:* I Dream of Africa *by Kuki Gallmann (Penguin). "I love this book so much because it reminds me of the great [illegible] I had with my friends in Africa last year."*


DKNY













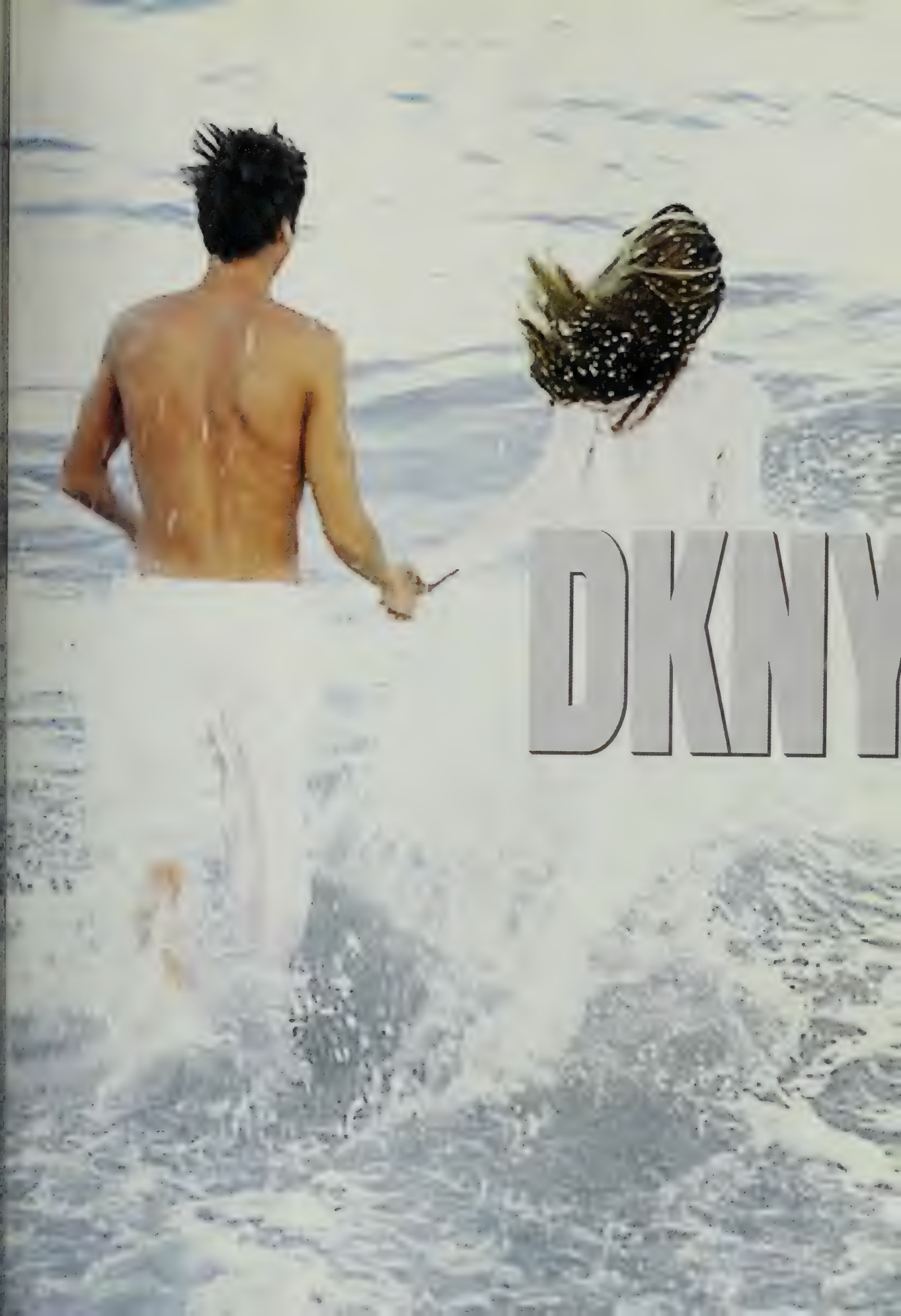











DKNY

MADONNA AND CHILD



AND I FEEL LIKE
I JUST GOT HOME

So go the lyrics to the title track of *Ray of Light*. And these days, Madonna's going home to her 16-month-old daughter, Lourdes Maria, whom she calls Lola. This photo, and those that follow, was taken in November, during the Thanksgiving trip to [illegible], Fla., where Madonna is in palm-lined Coconut [illegible]

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIO TESTINO • STYLED BY LORI GOLDSTEIN

VANITY FAIR
MARCH 1998

Living in a wilderness of mirrors and media glare, Madonna has run through every image in the pop-culture canon—from rebel to tart, icon, and glamour queen—over the past 15 years. Since the birth of her daughter, Lourdes, in 1996, she seems to be trying to learn about life beyond the lens. Listening to the rhythms of Madonna's world and of her extraordinary new CD, *Ray of Light*, INGRID SISCHY hears a woman on the verge of becoming herself



I *was* The Bell Jar.
—Madonna

Look what can happen in this country, they'd say. A girl lives in some out-of-the-way town for nineteen years ... and ends up steering New York like her own private car. Only I wasn't steering anything, not even myself.... I couldn't get myself to react. I felt very still and very empty, the way the eye of a tornado must feel, moving dully along in the middle of the surrounding hullabaloo.
The Bell Jar, by Sylvia Plath.

"From the minute I arrived in New York," Madonna tells me, "it was 'This is where I am, this is where I'm staying.' I *knew* I was going to suffer. I *knew* it was going to be hard. But I was not going back, and that's how it was, period.

"I used to go and sit at the fountain at Lincoln Center and watch all the people and cry," she continues. "I'd write in my journal, 'Will I ever know *anybody?*' It was *pathetic,*" she says. "It was a scene in a bad movie. But I always say, If you can't say 'I'll die if I don't do it,' you should not do it."

The setting is the entertainer's Central Park duplex, where, in Madonna's 1991 documentary, *Truth or Dare,* Warren Beatty accused her of not wanting to live off-camera. Now Madonna—who has been lying relatively low since the birth of her daughter, Lourdes, in October 1996, and the release of *Evita* a few months after—is trying to learn about life beyond the lens. Daily yoga sessions keep her focused and relaxed. It's the 90s, and the [illegible] more spiritual than [illegible] she is right on the [illegible] she is Madonna. She sa[illegible] think people are turning more inwards, going, 'Who am I? What am I doing?' "

This could sound high-and-mighty. But the Madonna I found didn't act as if she had all the answers. "She's not like a saint," a close friend says. "She's not always logical. Or always sweet. She is a human being." Warner senior vice president Liz Rosenberg, Madonna's longtime press adviser, reports: "She's 39, a little bit older. She's evolved, grown up, matured, and she's not so mad."

My first encounter for this profile came earlier at the Versace town house in Manhattan, where a few people were gathered for dinner with Donatella Versace. I arrived around dessert time. There were bodyguards outside; in the dining room was a paparazzo's dream. Beneath Frank Moore's very American paintings—which Gianni Versace commissioned—were Donatella and her husband, Paul Beck; Michael Stipe; Courtney Love and daughter, Frances Bean; Lori Goldstein; Madonna herself; Ingrid Casares, co-owner of Miami's Liquid nightclub; and Madonna's brother Christopher Ciccone, a designer and artist. The first thing Madonna said to me was "Oh, you just missed the baby." I notice her huge eyes and dark, Sally Bowles nail polish.

"Madonna and Courtney together are like Joan Crawford and Bette Davis, and it's hard to tell who's who," one of the guests whispered later, after we had moved to the living room, where Picassos surround shimmering Italian glass. After much ringing of cellulars, some of the guests decided to move on to the Spy bar. Madonna headed home. I never took the chance to discuss our work; there was too much voltage. Later, on the phone, I began, "I'm sorry we didn't talk. I got shy, I guess." Madonna replied, "Well, in that room, *someone* had to be shy."

Upon my arrival at her apartment, Madonna and Lourdes—whom her mother calls Lola—greet me, hand in hand. The baby, her hair pulled back into two perfect knobs, wears plaid. Madonna's dark outfit, however, is immaculately understated. These days, the hair, engineered by the great minds of the International Follicle Set, is nonplatinum and running toward the Pre-Raphaelite. It says: "Don't notice me."

Madonna and daughter are in New York after spending Thanksgiving in Miami, where Madonna has a place in Coconut Grove and a boat called *Baby Pumpkin,* from which she feeds the dolphins. Though she has been spotted house-hunting everywhere from Nyack, New York, to London, she now lives mostly in Los Angeles—"because there's a yard," she says, adding that she feels the drift back East, where she wants Lourdes to be educated.

Madonna's California home is a comfortable but inconspicuous place in Los Feliz, a hip neighborhood between Hollywood and downtown L.A. It was purchased in the hectic days just before Lourdes was born, when her mother was struggling to complete *Evita* and the remix on the soundtrack album. Madonna, it was said, was determined to avoid bringing the baby to her old L.A. residence, a grand, high-in-the-Hollywood-Hills, and very visible lair where she was harassed by a particularly zealous stalker.

The baby is no shut-in. Lourdes turns up at her mom's photo sessions and was a presence in the studio during the creation of Madonna's new CD, *Ray of Light.* It looks like the singer has decided not to exile the child from her work world. Stylists with memories of dodging flying dresses enjoy watching the two make goo-goo noises and exchange funny faces. When I ask if she's worried about protecting Lourdes, *la madre* replies, "It's the other way around. *She* protects me."

After Lourdes departs with her nanny, we move to the living room, designed by her brother Christopher in a French Deco style inspired by Eugène Printz. Madonna joins me on the floor. Léger's *Les Deux Bicyclettes* hangs over the fireplace. In Madonna's childhood home in Michigan, where she lived with the memory of her mother, she shared a room with two sisters. She tells me that on her side of the wall she had posters featuring dancers and "dorky sunsets." One of the latter, she says, included the message "Let your love like the sunset surround me."

I ask who she was then. "I see a very lonely girl who was searching for something," she begins, "looking for a mother figure. I wasn't rebellious in


"I wasn't
rebellious in a
conventional way.
I wanted to be
somebody."



HER OWN STEPS

She drove herself toward being good, running faster and faster. When piano lessons made her "flail my limbs," she ignored her father and started dancing, which her late mother had loved. "Ballet classes," she begins, recounting the lessons, "jazz, tap, modern, and all that." Says her friend Alek Keshishian, "The will of somebody who does what she's done is remarkable. She became, I think, like the worst stage mother could have been."

"If you can't say 'I'll die if I don't do it,' you shou


t do it," she says of shooting for
stars.

took a while for us to get to this place."

On the professional front, Madonna has loyalists who've worked with her through the years, but you notice the number of acquaintances who speak of her lack of warmth, her need to always be the girl with the right answer, and her habit of jettisoning those whose purpose has been served. Yet she arouses sympathetic reactions, too, from those who describe the little girl—always determined, sometimes bossy, sometimes touching—behind the woman obsessed with getting everything right. They mention the personal phone calls when she's running late or forced to break appointments, cite her basic decency, her private acts of support, and her wry humor. (At a restaurant, when I drag the sleeve of my best interview sweater across a plate of olive oil, she assures me, "Don't worry, Miuccia Prada strikes me as an olive-oil-on-your-sweater type of girl.")

But she's got her moods. Other stars bring up Madonna's tendency to denigrate those she feels threatened by, and dwell on her rudeness and lack of interest in others. Someone who has known her well since the early 80s says, "Sometimes I wonder if there is a real heart beating in there."

I think there is. But she's a master at swallowing feelings of pain and loss. She tells me, during our discussion of a song, how she hates saying good-bye, isn't good at it, and—characteristically—avoids doing it.

You get the feeling that she's been more than aware of her seeming lack of feeling, and that she's paid. "Open your heart," Madonna pleaded—perhaps to herself—in her 1986 single, and by 1994 she was going further. "Love tried to welcome me but my soul drew back," she wrote. In "Frozen," *Ray of Light*'s first single, Madonna sings, "You're broken when your heart's not open."

"Some of the lyrical sentiment in 'Frozen' was drawn from my own personal experience," Madonna tells me. But she says that, ironically, the song's visual images were inspired by the movie *The English Patient,* specifically scenes where Ralph Fiennes's character makes his way across the desert to get help for the woman he loves. "I know it sounds so dorky," she says. "But it really moved me. I wept, and I can't even tell you why. For me, it was just—oh, to be loved in that way; oh, to love someone that way."

Remembering the look I saw on her face when Lourdes was with us, I say, "Don't you have someone like that? What about Lourdes? You obviously love her unconditionally."

"It's what it feels like to have her in my arms. I knew that having a child would be an incredible healing experience . . . because I didn't have a mother. I just knew my Karma was to have a girl, and I instinctively had a longing for her. But I didn't know what it was going to be like."

Wondering if she thinks that motherhood is the only way to experience these feelings, I bring up my cat and she smiles, nodding her head. "A companion is a companion," she tells me.

Newspaper accounts notwithstanding, she doesn't appear to be looking to further her single parenthood. "I would love to have another child. But I'd like to be in a stable relationship. Sometimes you want to look over at somebody and say, 'What do *you* think we should do?' "

As we all know, Madonna hasn't always been blessed with restraint. After all, this is the person who treated the world to the following and worse in her 1992 book, *Sex:* "I love my pussy, it is the complete summation of my life. . . . My pussy is the temple of learning."

Who am I to say that it isn't? But it wasn't the site of the great, revolutionary work of art that the *Sex* hype promised. And it led to a broad questioning of its author's much-ballyhooed ability to intuit the public's desire. *Sex* felt like pure titillation, a calculated matter, a rip-off of those who had genuinely put themselves on the line to fight AIDS-era repression. She served that task better, more vitally and authentically, in her music.

No one has ever known what sort of explosions *Sex* set off within the Ciccone family. I ask Madonna about her father's reaction. "My father keeps expecting to show up and see a production of *Little Bo-Peep,*" she replies. "He talked to me about *Sex* in an indirect way. He said something like 'Why did you feel the need to do that?' I didn't answer. But he never came out and said he disapproved. That's not my father's style."

I wonder how Madonna, in hindsight, regards the project. "It was my own personal rebellion against my father," she tells me, "against the way I was raised, against the culture, against society, against everything. It was just a huge, massive act of rebellion—and it was also about having fun."

Sex distracted attention from Madonna's good *Erotica* album—which came out as the book was released. Not long after, her disastrous movie *Body of Evidence* was a third strike against her. Together, these events led to what Madonna describes as "the rock bottom" and nicked her confidence, one of the primary sources of her magnetism. "What was happening on the outside was happening on the inside," she says. "It had to do with the things you go through. When you get famous, and everyone says nice things, you buy into it. Everything you are becomes founded on what people say. And when people say horrible things, you start sucking. Then you wake up and realize that it's all bullshit and you've taken away your own power." But it was the beginning of an awakening of sorts, and the sexual experimentation—including her flirtations with bisexuality and S&M—which *Sex* appears to have grown from, may have been a necessary chapter.

She set out to get the power back. For instance, she set out to improve her voice. "The hardest thing," she says, "has been letting go of the idea that I didn't have a good singing voice. Even if you don't want to believe the things that they write, they sink into your subconscious. You think maybe it's true."

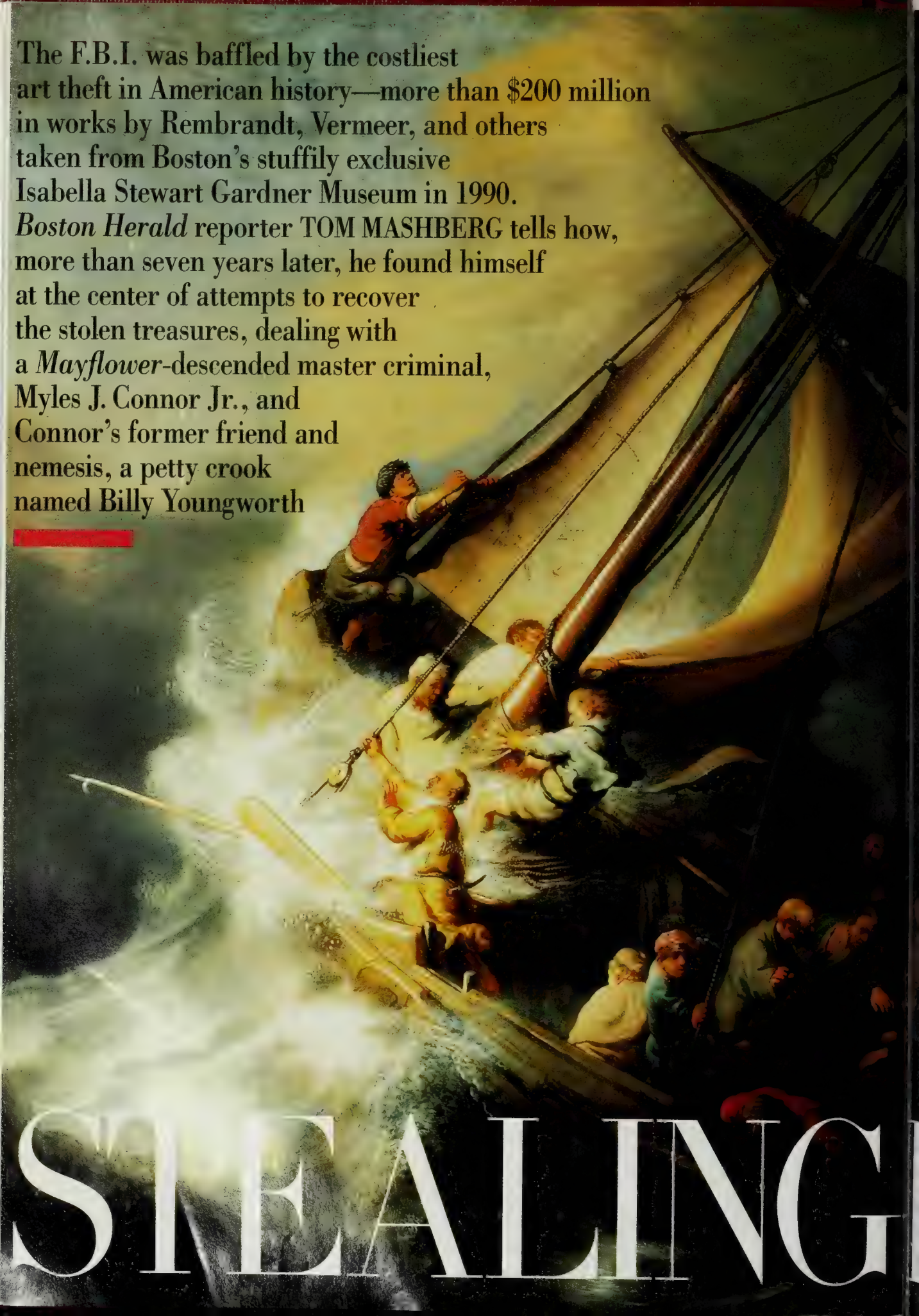
"I ate the microphone," she says of the *Ray of Light* sessions. Listen to her first albums and the contrast with her old infectious Minnie Mouse inflections is actually amazing. Not a lot of people begin singing lessons at 35, certainly not many pop stars with a wall of gold records. But Madonna headed off for vocal coaching before *Evita.* And the rewards of the work are more apparent now that she's returned to her own style of music.

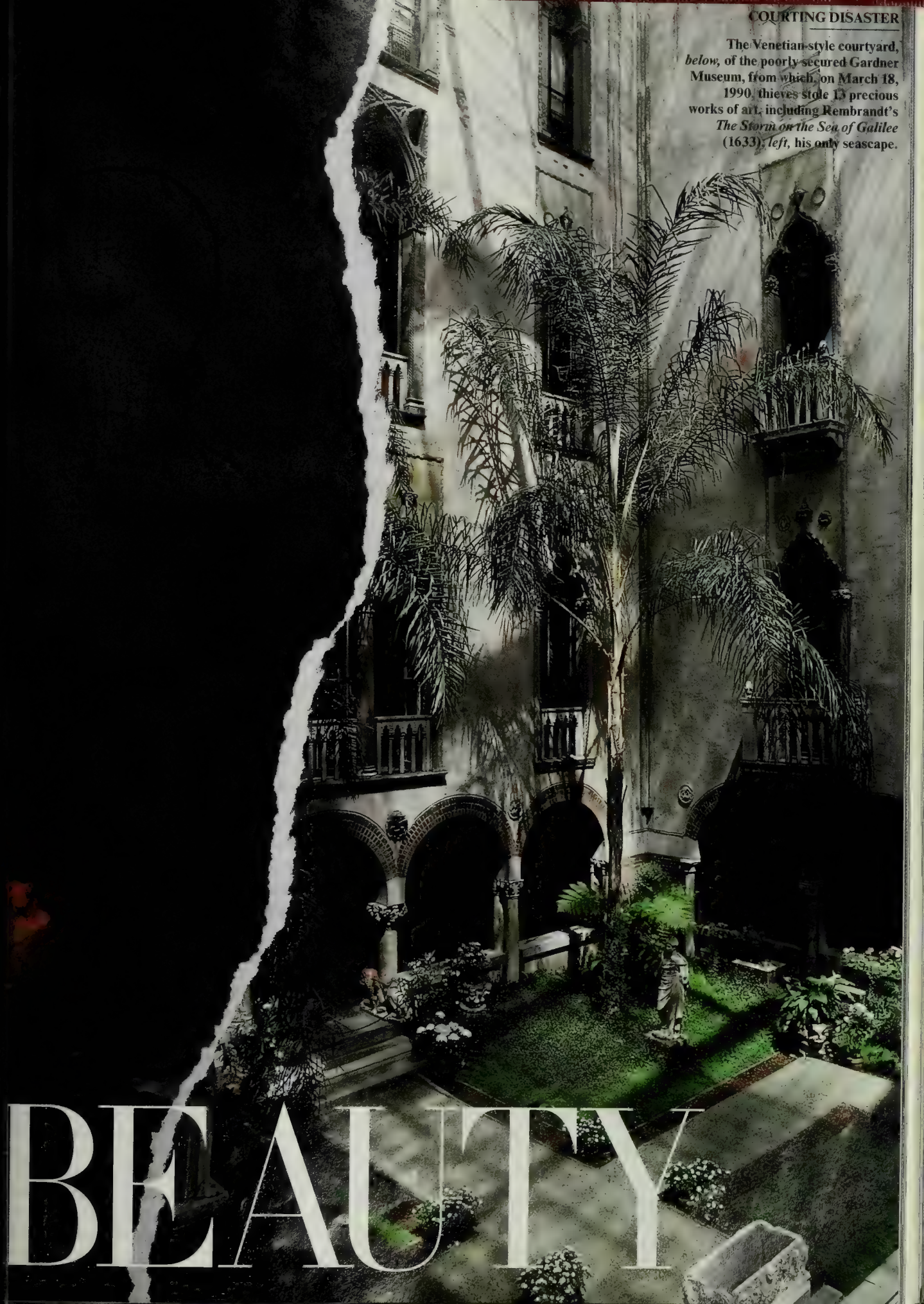
Besides her voice, she pumped up her business CONTINUED ON PAGE 260



ADONNA
ND LOLA

he protects me,"
adonna says of her
ghter, Lourdes.
instinctively had a
ging for her."


The F.B.I. was baffled by the costliest art theft in American history—more than $200 million in works by Rembrandt, Vermeer, and others taken from Boston's stuffily exclusive Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in 1990. *Boston Herald* reporter TOM MASHBERG tells how, more than seven years later, he found himself at the center of attempts to recover the stolen treasures, dealing with a *Mayflower*-descended master criminal, Myles J. Connor Jr., and Connor's former friend and nemesis, a petty crook named Billy Youngworth
STEALING



COURTING DISASTER

The Venetian-style courtyard, *below,* of the poorly secured Gardner Museum, from which, on March 18, 1990, thieves stole 13 precious works of art, including Rembrandt's *The Storm on the Sea of Galilee* (1633), *left,* his only seascape.

BEAUTY



SERPENTS IN THE GARDNER

A detail of John Singer Sargent's 1887–88 portrait of Isabella Stewart Gardner. *Insets,* the March 19, 1990, front pages of *The Boston Globe* and the *Boston Herald.*

From the passenger seat o the blue-gray Crown Victo ria, I could see a decrepi low-rise housing project. I was two A.M. on August 1 of last year, and my drive and I were about an hou outside Boston. He parke in front of an old ware house across from the proj ect, which was noisy ever at that hour. A scrawny wom an with braided hair ra over and peered in the ca window. In that neighbor hood we had to be either cops or customers looking fo drugs, and we were obviously not cops.

"Billy sent us," the driver told her, and she nodded an hurried away.

"Billy" was William P. Youngworth III, a petty crimina from the suburbs of Boston who said he could help recov er 11 paintings stolen seven and a half years earlier fron the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. I was a reporter fo the *Boston Herald,* and my driver had been chosen b Youngworth to show me some proof of his claim.

He put on rubber gloves and escorted me, by th glow of a flashlight, into the warehouse and up fou flights of stairs. We turned down a dim corridor linec with padlocked metal doors. Stopping at one, he pro duced a set of keys and opened the lock. Inside, I saw plastic bins on wheels, with steamer trunks in some o them. My guide reached into one of the bins an pulled out an oversize black cardboard tube.

Gingerly he extracted a large, rolled-up canvas, whic he unfurled before me. It was, I am certain, Rem brandt's *The Storm on the Sea of Galilee,* arguably th most famous missing painting in the world. I saw frayec edges, where the painting had been cut from its fram on the night it was stolen, and I was shown, in the flash light's beam, Rembrandt's signature.

Then I was sent away in a taxi, after being ordered no to write a word in the *Herald* for a week, by which tim the cache would have been moved to another location I suspected, but never knew for sure, that Youngwort had followed us. A haunted-looking man of 38, pal and beefy, with a thick Boston accent and a dee reservoir of paranoia, he would trust no one—not m or even the driver he had chosen—with the grea score of his lifetime.

My trip to the warehouse had its genesis th week before, on August 13, when Youngwort held one of the most startling news conference in Massachusetts history. Standing outside th courthouse in Dedham, a Boston suburb, wher he was being arraigned for possession c firearms and a controlled substance, he de clared that he could "broker the return of 11 of the 13 priceless items take from the Gardner Museum in 1990.

Youngworth, known to the law mostly for passing bad checks and running a shabby antiques depot in nearby Randolph, said he would help get the art back in exchange for the $5 million reward posted by the museum and immunity from prosecution. Then he asked for one more thing—something that gave this former convict with a dozen aliases a much-needed aura of credibility. He asked for "the release from prison of my friend Myles Connor."

In law-enforcement and art-theft circles, the name Myles J. Connor Jr. carries weight. At 55, Connor, with a *Mayflower* pedigree and a fatal attraction to crime, has been a rock 'n' roll guitarist, a karate expert, and a collector of precious samurai swords. If Youngworth had Connor's go-ahead to make a public offer for the art's return—and obviously he did—there had to be substance to his claim.

Although Connor and Youngworth were both behind bars on March 18, 1990, when the Gardner was robbed, people familiar with museum theft had long suspected that Connor must have known about the burglary. In the arena of art crime, his résumé has few equals. In 1974 this elfin, red-haired son of a police officer was arrested in Mashpee, on Cape Cod, for trying to fence three works by N. C. Wyeth and one by Andrew Wyeth. Valued at $165,000, they had all been stolen earlier that year from the Woolworth estate in Monmouth, Maine.

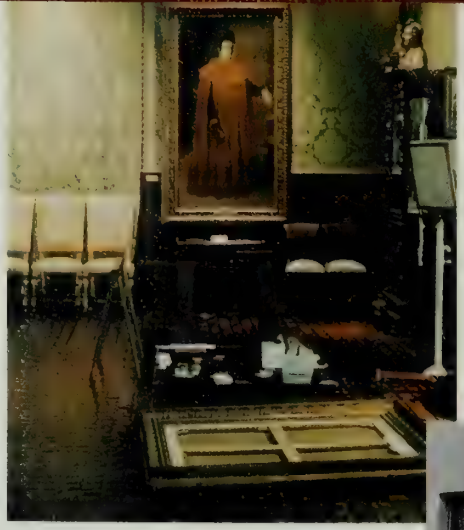
That was not Connor's first "art caper," as he likes to say, but it was a felony—a "jackpot with the Feds." Seeking to barter his way out of a likely 10-year sentence, he masterminded, nine months later, the daylight abduction of a Rembrandt, *Portrait of Elsbeth van Rijn,* from Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, known as the M.F.A. The Rembrandt was soon recovered, with no charges filed, and Connor was given generous consideration at his parole hearing for his aid in brokering the return of the stolen painting.

Connor thereby achieved a most unusual trade-off—fine art for freedom—which became his criminal signature. Last August, it seemed, he was looking to reprise his Rembrandt gambit, but from prison this time, with Youngworth as his errand boy.

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is a four-story Venetian-style palazzo built in Boston's Fenway district at the turn of the century by the flamboyant socialite wife of Jack Gardner with some help from her friend Bernard Berenson, the art expert. It sits a short distance from the M.F.A.

Though small and certifiably stuffy, the Gardner holds one of the country's major private art collections, including Titian's *Europa,* which Rubens called "the greatest painting in the world." Up until March 18, 1990, the Brahmin bastion extolled the fact that none of its roughly 2,500 works had ever been replaced, or removed, or even *moved* (nor had any acquisition been permitted) since the death of Isabella Stewart Gardner in 1924.

Things changed drastically, however, shortly after one A.M. that March night. Two white men dressed as Boston police officers knocked on a wooden side door of the museum, which had a peephole behind ornate iron bars, and talked





CHIPS AHOY

The crime scene, *left:* thieves took down a Rembrandt near Zurbarán's *A Doctor of Law* and a disputed Rembrandt and sliced them from their frames, leaving paint chips. *Below,* the door by which they entered.

their way past the two security guards. Once inside the vestibule, the cops became robbers, forcing the guards into the basement and handcuffing them to pipes. Done up in false mustaches to avoid later identification, the thieves soon disabled the alarm system, removed the security videos, and got down to business.

Bypassing the Titian and other Renaissance masterpieces, the men headed for the Gardner's vaulted Dutch Room. They smashed the glass front over Vermeer's *The Concert* and removed the oil painting—one of about 35 surviving works by the Dutch master—in its frame. From the other side of the panel displaying the Vermeer, they plucked *Landscape with an Obelisk* (an oil on oak attributed to Rembrandt but recently determined to have been painted by one of his acolytes, Govaert Flinck). From the wall opposite the Vermeer, they took a postage-stamp-size Rembrandt self-portrait, an etching.

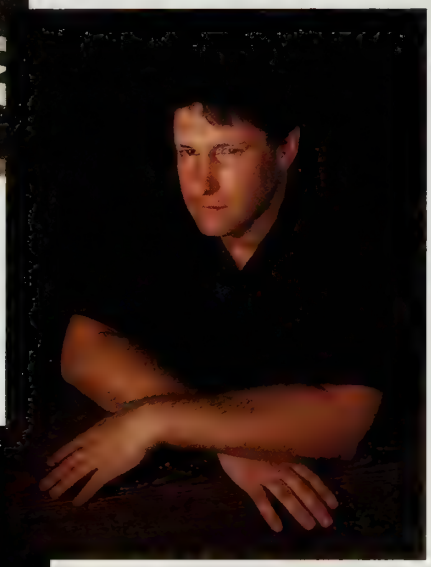
From the back wall, they removed two frames suspended by long wires. One held Rembrandt's only seascape, *The Storm on the Sea of Galilee,* the other a disputed Rembrandt, *A Lady and Gentleman in Black.* For reasons unknown, but probably having to do with how the canvases were fastened to their mounts, the thieves sliced these works from their frames. Stiffened by age and varnish, the paintings left behind a cascade of 360-year-old paint chips.

From the Blue Room, featuring Impressionists, the thieves took a Manet oil, *Chez Tortoni,* and from the Short Gallery, five works by Degas: *La Sortie du Pelage,* a pencil and watercolor on paper; *Cortège aux Environs de Florence,* a pencil sketch with a rose wash on paper; *Three Mounted Jockeys,* an ink sketch with rose, flesh, and white washes on paper; and two versions of a charcoal on paper entitled *Program for an Artistic Soirée.* Two other items were taken: a 2.7-pound Chinese bronze beaker, or *ku,* from the Shang dynasty (circa 1200 B.C.), and the bronze finial from a Napoleonic flagstaff.

Well before dawn, the thieves were gone. Although they had been sloppy with the Rembrandts, they left behind not a single clue to their identities or their motive. The F.B.I. soon took charge of the case, acknowledged to be the costliest art heist in U.S. history. Its value has been put at $200

"More than three-quarters of what you see in museums was looted or stolen," says Myles Connor.







DEN OF THIEVES

Master art thief Myles Connor, *below*, and his former associate William Youngworth, *right*, both in jail at the time of the Gardner heist and both in jail now, claim they can help broker the return of the stolen works, including Vermeer's *The Concert* (1658–60), *above*.

million, but, given the rarity of the Vermeer and the Rembrandt seascape, no real estimate is possible.

The Gardner theft was a baffling baptism in crime for the museum's trustees. Carrying a meager $40 million endowment, the Gardner had not only lax security but also minimal insurance. Its first reward offer, $1 million, stood for seven years without prompting a single worthwhile lead. In 1997, at the urging of the F.B.I., the museum upped the reward to $5 million, but there was still no useful progress.

Now, after more than seven barren years, Youngworth surfaced, dropping Connor's notorious name and imperiously issuing demands. It was a strange moment for a museum that had investigated, by its own count, hundreds of leads and tips that had not panned out. One lead, which sent F.B.I. agent Daniel Falzon to Japan in 1992, had ended dismally. The "Rembrandt" Falzon went to view was a fake so feeble that even the artistically challenged detective quickly spied its flaws.

But as odd as Youngworth must have seemed to Gardner and law-enforcement officials that day in Dedham, he made sense to me. By then I had spent three months probing both Myles Connor and the Gardner case log, and I'd stumbled across Youngworth's secret role as a caretaker for Connor's goods. Connor was known to hoard artworks, both legally obtained and otherwise, and I had bluffed Youngworth into believing that I knew he and Connor were sitting on the Gardner haul. I threatened to dog him in print unless he came clean. He offered me something even better: an exclusive on the Gardner heist.

Since then I have been both a reporter and a participant in the negotiations surrounding the return of the paintings. I am confident that the artworks will be returned, even if the whole truth never comes out.

The Gardner case first drew my attention three months before Youngworth's press conference, as I sat in a small Rhode Island prison interviewing a forlorn inmate named Edward B. "Rocco" Ellis.

Ellis, a bullish man of 48 with a record of extortion and cocaine trafficking, was once a professional chef and married to the Boston aesthetician Elizabeth Grady. He is serving 25 years in federal prison for violating the Mann Act—transporting a minor across state lines with the intent of performing a sexual act. Ellis insists that he was framed by a former girlfriend. His lone ally on the outside, Diana Sandgren, a private citizen who devotes herself to aiding prisoners, had approached the *Herald* to look into his case.

I was willing to listen, having written often about overzealous sex-abuse prosecutions that were in fact bum raps. Ellis in no way fit the profile of the sex offender, and he was suffering a brutal time in the penal system because his conviction made him a "skinner"—lower even than a stool pigeon in the felons' food chain. He showed me a two-inch knife wound on his abdomen which, he said, had been stitched by a fellow inmate using a sharpened paper clip as a needle and dental floss for sutures. "I don't think I'll live beyond Christmas," he said.

Ellis then said that he had shared a prison cell in the early 90s with Myles Connor, and that Connor knew the names of two men, since deceased, who had been in on the Gardner heist.

In March 1990, even though Connor was in jail, he was a natural suspect for the robbery, but he has maintained consistently that he was not involved. His longtime lawyer, Martin K. Leppo, said then, and repeats now, "Myles would never tolerate butchering art."

Still, starting in 1992, with Connor's approval and support, Ellis had sought to use the two names he'd been given by Connor—Robert A. "Bobby" Donati and David A. Houghton—as leverage with federal officials in Boston. It is common for inmates to trade information for judicial favors. Ellis hoped his fresh leads in a stale case might be parlayed into a transfer to a medium-security

prison near his home in western Massachusetts.

For nearly five years Ellis had had no luck with his bartering, and by the time I met him he was frantic. Determined to be taken seriously, he blurted out that Connor had access to a valuable stolen artifact that would be used to bargain for Ellis's release once Connor left prison in 1999. The item was the royal beeswax seal that had been affixed to the Massachusetts Bay Colony charter by King Charles I of England upon the founding of the colony in 1629.

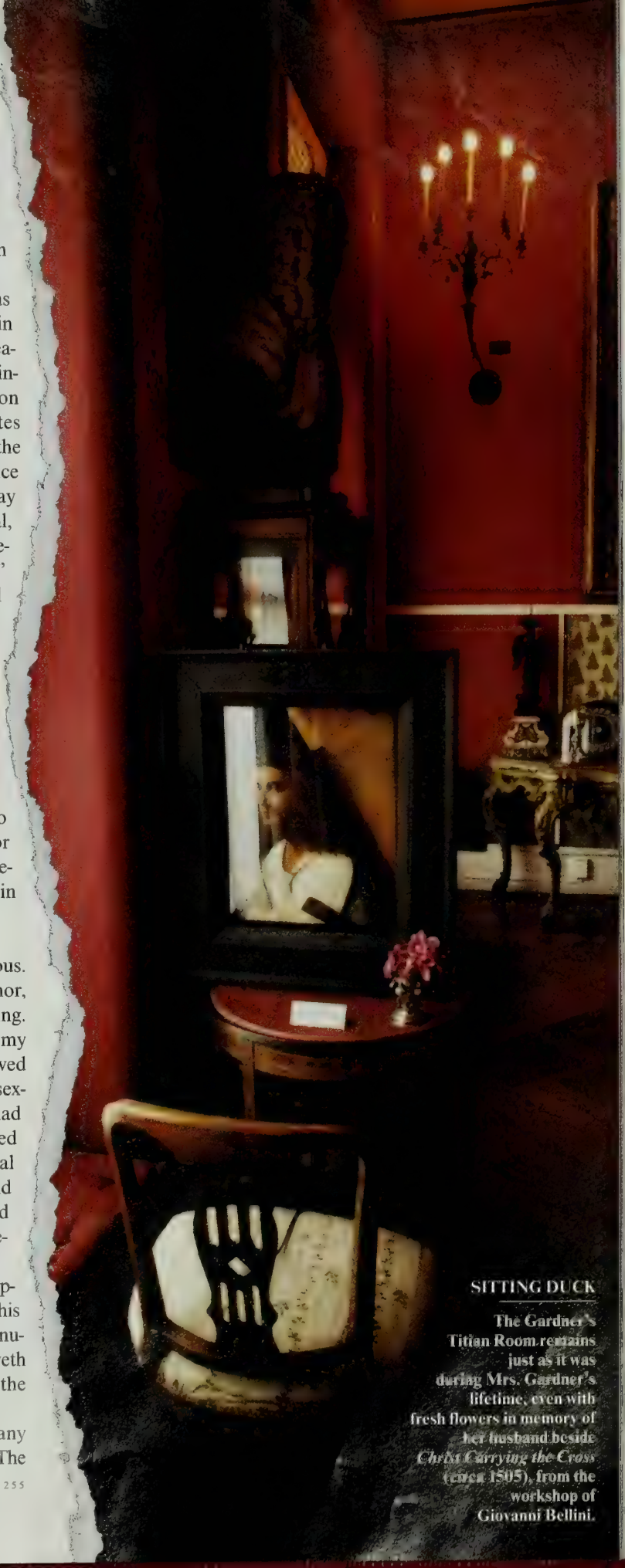
In 1984 the first page of the handwritten charter, as well as the seal, had been stolen from a display case in the basement of the Massachusetts State House, on Beacon Street. Police recovered the charter page by coincidence seven months later, during a raid on a Boston apartment which Connor and some of his associates used for a safe house. Connor was never charged in the charter caper, but there was little doubt among police or the underworld that it had been his score. The day police found the charter page, they missed the seal, which resembles a chunk of hardened cow dung. Referred to as "the hockey puck" and "my fuzzy friend" by Ellis, the seal was apparently, 13 years later, still under Connor's firm control.

Later, Connor himself would tell me that the seal was far too insignificant to swap for his own release, but he confirmed that it might have been used to help Ellis. At the time I met with Ellis, however, Connor and I had no relationship. He was wary of my motives—for all he knew I was part of an F.B.I. sting—and he would say only, in the vaguest terms, that he "possibly" had access to the seal. He did so as a favor to Ellis, who needed to prove that Connor was truly his ally. In the end, it was a very telling remark, because just weeks later the seal reappeared, in the custody of William Youngworth.

Ellis had told me enough to get me curious. He had indeed shared a cell with Connor, and the seal, in fact, was then still missing. So on and off for two months, with my *Herald* colleague Laura Brown, I followed up Ellis's tales. First I checked out his sex-abuse prosecution, which to my mind had clear flaws, particularly regarding the way his alleged victim had been questioned by inexperienced social workers. Later I looked into the mystery of the seal and other New England art crimes. By early July I had grown obsessed with Myles Connor and the two reputed Gardner thieves.

Bobby Donati turned out to be a mobster with a reputation as a hit man and armored-car robber. He and his brother, Dicky, also now dead, had been involved in numerous robberies with Connor, dating back to the Wyeth case in 1974 and including, Connor later told me, the M.F.A. heist in April 1975.

Connor also acknowledged casing the Gardner many times, with both Donatis, beginning in the early 1970s. The veteran burglars "couldn't help but CONTINUED ON PAGE 255



SITTING DUCK

The Gardner's Titian Room remains just as it was during Mrs. Gardner's lifetime, even with fresh flowers in memory of her husband beside *Christ Carrying the Cross* (circa 1505), from the workshop of Giovanni Bellini.

STATE OF GRACE

Next month, Grace Paley, America's mistress of the short story, publishes the latest of her rare and cherished books, *Just as I Thought*, a medley of political essays and family memoirs. At Paley's Vermont cabin, ALEXIS JETTER marks the 75th birthday of the angelic-looking grandmother with revolution in her blood

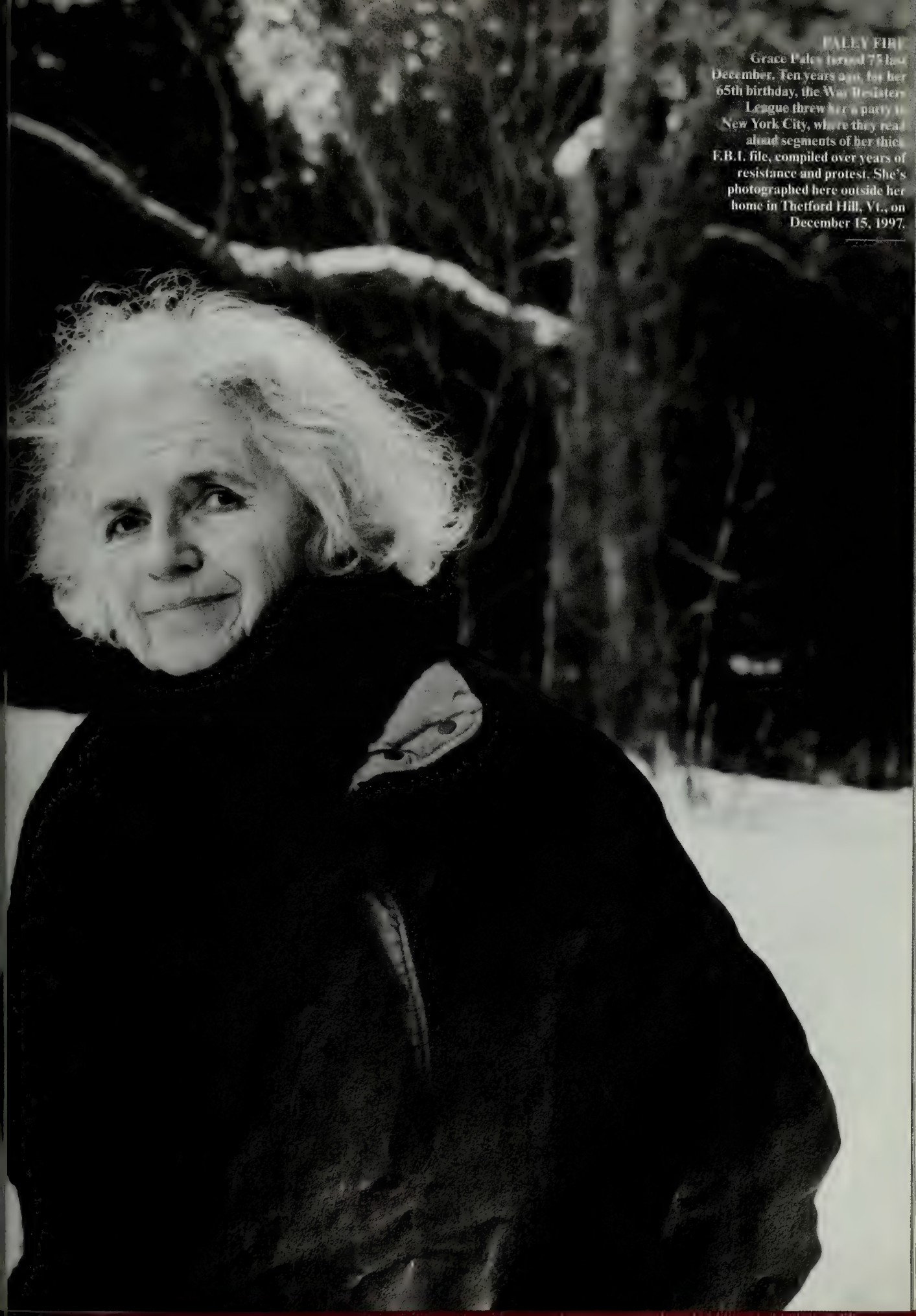


As Grace Paley, one of America's premier short-story writers and "splinter in the toe" of authority, was strolling down New York's West 11th Street, an older man called to her from across the street. "Grace! Grace!" he greeted her. "It's great to see you. How's the family?" "Charlie!" she said. "You look great. How are you?" They talked awhile, then parted. "Who was that guy?" asked Paley's son, Danny. "Oh," she said, "he's an undercover agent who used to follow me around. He's retired now."

Though she looks like the slightly rumpled Jewish grandmother that she is—with untamed white hair and an aging cherub's smile—Grace Paley has always relished her clashes with the law. Friends who recently gathered near her home in Thetford Hill, Vermont, for her 75th birthday reminisced about the many times she failed to arrive at a reading or an arts colony because she was in a holding tank—for unfurling a banner on the White House lawn to protest the arms race, or for scaling a fence in New Hampshire to block construction of the Seabrook nuclear-power plant. "The first time I met Grace, she was lying flat on her back in the Capitol building for a major women's movement demonstration," recalls Robin Reisig, a former *Village Voice* reporter. "She jumped up, hugged me, said very sweet, complimentary things about my writing, and then lay back down again to be arrested."

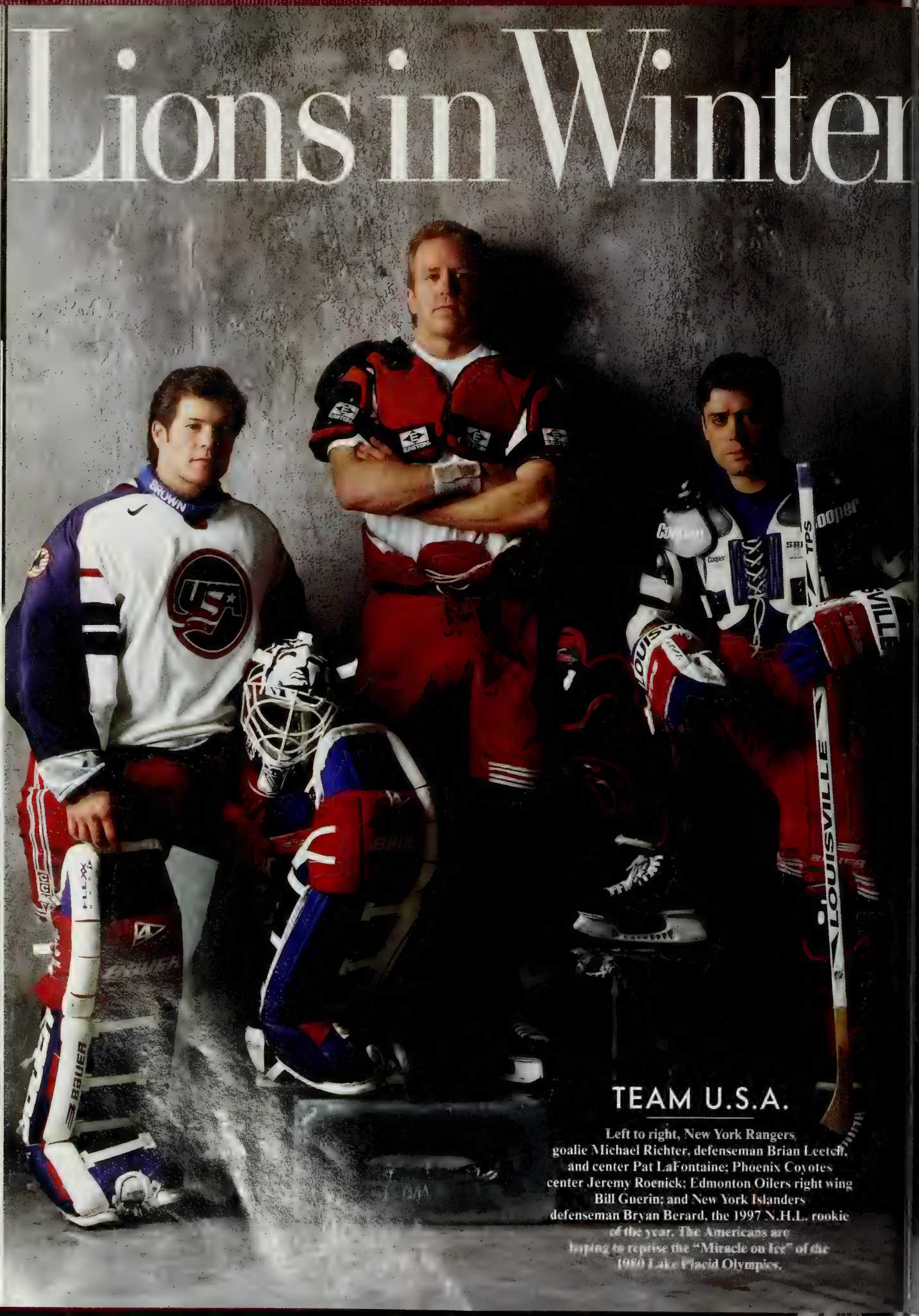
Next month, *Just as I Thought,* a collection of Paley's political essays and family memoirs, is due out from Farrar, Straus & Giroux. It is her first book of new material in six years, but readers are used to waiting for Paley's work. Fifteen years separated her first two collections of short stories, *The Little Disturbances of Man* (1959) and *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute* (1974), and then another 11 passed before *Later the Same* CONTINUED ON PAGE 264

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ



PALEY FILE
Grace Paley turned 75 last December. Ten years ago, for her 65th birthday, the War Resisters League threw her a party in New York City, where they read aloud segments of her thick F.B.I. file, compiled over years of resistance and protest. She's photographed here outside her home in Thetford Hill, Vt., on December 15, 1997.

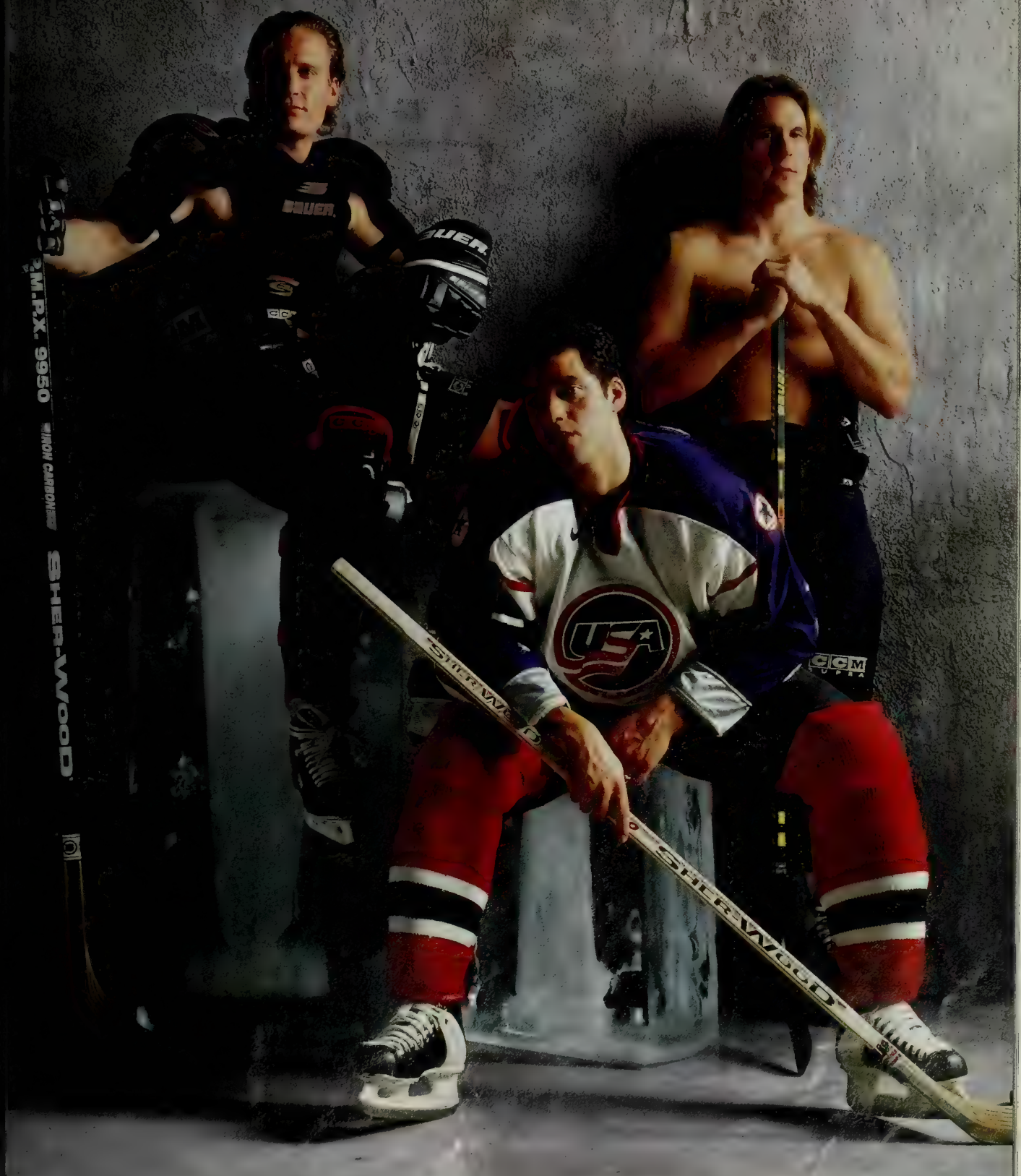
Lions in Winter



TEAM U.S.A.

Left to right, New York Rangers goalie Michael Richter, defenseman Brian Leetch, and center Pat LaFontaine; Phoenix Coyotes center Jeremy Roenick; Edmonton Oilers right wing Bill Guerin; and New York Islanders defenseman Bryan Berard, the 1997 N.H.L. rookie of the year. The Americans are hoping to replise the "Miracle on Ice" of the 1980 Lake Placid Olympics.

For the first time ever, the National Hockey League is suspending its season this month, to allow its best players—including Canada's Wayne Gretzky and Paul Kariya, the U.S.'s John LeClair, Sweden's Peter Forsberg and Finland's Teemu Selanne—to compete in the Winter Olympics. TIMOTHY GREENFIELD-SANDERS shoots the stars who will be in Nagano, Japan, while MORDECAI RICHLER remembers the glory days of a sport that is once again heating up the ice



When I caught up with the great Detroit Red Wings center Gordie Howe in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1980, he told me, "Hockey's different today, isn't it? The animosity is gone. I mean, we didn't play golf with referees and linesmen. Why, in the old days with the Red Wings, I remember, we and the Montreal Canadiens were traveling to a game in Detroit on the same train. We were starving, but their car was between ours and the diner, and there was no way we were going to walk through there. We waited until the train stopped in London, Ontario, and walked around the Canadiens' car to eat."

I cut my hockey teeth in the late 40s on the old six-team National Hockey League: Montreal, Toronto, New York, Chicago, Boston, and Detroit. Those, those were the vintage years. A time when hockey was still a winter sport, the N.H.L. regular season limited to 50 games, the top four teams then going into the Stanley Cup playoffs. My own cherished team, the incomparable Montreal Canadiens, *nos glorieux,* was unique in the sport, not because they had won more Stanley Cups than any other club, but because the players had all been born or bred in either Montreal or the outlying towns, and, as local boys, they were entitled to our loyalty: Maurice "the Rocket" Richard, the first player to score 50 goals in a 50-game season, Doug Harvey, Jean Beliveau, Guy Lafleur, and Jacques Plante, the first goalie to wear a mask, but only after he had broken his nose four times, his cheekbones twice, and his jaw once, as well as suffering a hairline skull fracture, a concussion, and 200 stitches in his face.

Nowadays, however, the endless N.H.L. regular season lingers into late spring: 26 teams, split into four divisions, struggling through 82 games each. It's seldom fire-wagon hockey anymore, magnificent skaters lifting us out of our seats with excitement as they gather in a long lead pass and start across the red line, swooping clear of defensemen to score. The problem today is the number of journeymen drafted, out of necessity, to fill the 26 team rosters. These uglies clutch, they grab, they trip and hold, anything to slow down what was once the fastest game in sport, much to the dismay of the game's bona fide artists—say, Wayne Gretzky, Mark Messier, young Paul Kariya, and, before he retired, Mario Lemieux. Disenchanted fans look forward to the rare international series, where only the truly talented compete. So this February the cognoscenti will be hoping for a little magic on ice in Nagano, Japan, where, for the first time ever, the N.H.L.'s *ne plus ultra* will be skating for their national teams in the Winter Olympic Games.

The first world ice-hockey championship I ever attended—in Stockholm, in 1963—was played on a much more modest level. Canada was represented by the Trail Smoke Eaters of British Columbia, who were denounced as hooligans in the Swedish press, a typical headline running, THE CANADIANS WANT TO SEE BLOOD. When I met the Trail Smoke Eaters' fulminating coach, Bobby Kromm, he protested, "They called me a slum. Am I a slum?"

Certainly not, I said, and then I asked him why the European players, who preferred a finesse game, didn't go in for bodychecking.

"They condone it," he said, "that's why."

I must have looked baffled.

"They *condone* it. *Don't you speak English?*"

The quintessential international series was yet to come, the N.H.L. all-stars versus the Russians in 1972. With pity Canadian hearts were laden, everybody anticipating a blowout for the N.H.L. team. But, in the event, the superb Russians amazed us with their precision passing. That heart-stopper of a series was tied, 3–3–1,





THE GREAT GRETZKY

Wayne Gretzky, photographed for *Vanity Fair* on January 2, 1998, after a Rangers practice. Gretzky, whose nickname is "the Great One," holds the N.H.L. career records for most goals, most assists, and most points.

TEAM SWEDEN

Clockwise from top, Toronto Maple Leafs center Mats Sundin; New York Rangers right wing Niklas Sundstrom; Colorado Avalanche center Peter Forsberg, who scored the gold-medal-winning goal in 1994 in Lillehammer; and New York Islanders goaltender Tommy Salo. The Lillehammer medal was Sweden's first Olympic gold in hockey.





TEAM RUSSIA

Clockwise from top left, New York Islanders center rgei Nemchinov, Ottawa Senators enter Alexei Yashin, Edmonton ers left wing Valeri Zelepukin, and New York Rangers defenseman xander Karpovtsev and right wing Alexei Kovalev. The Russians ominated Olympic hockey from 1984 to 1992.



the final game being played in Moscow, Canada skidded to a stop, just about everybody in Canada in thrall to his TV set. Our manhood was redeemed at 19:26 of the third period, when the hitherto undistinguished Toronto Maple Leafs left wing, Paul Henderson, gained instant immortality by potting the winning goal.

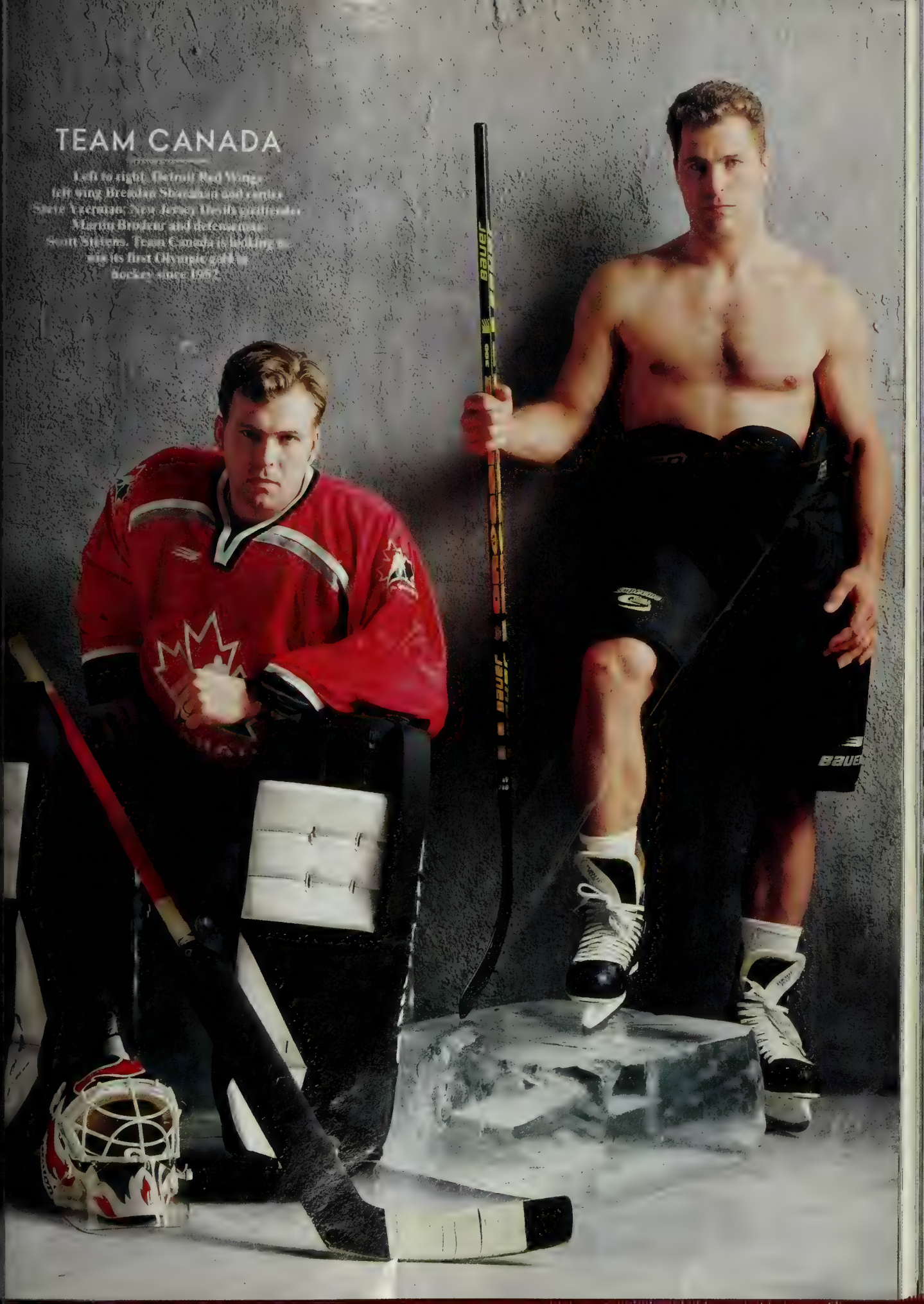
When European players became a factor in the N.H.L., in the mid-70s, then Canadiens coach Claude Ruel was asked why our team was deficient in scouting the Continent. "Nothing," he said, "would make me cross the Athletic Ocean."

Now European players are among the best in the N.H.L., but I doubt that the current crop of Russians will be a serious threat in Nagano. I look to the Swedes, led by Colorado Avalanche center Peter Forsberg and Toronto Maple Leafs center Mats Sundin, to be contenders. Ditto the Finns, bolstered by the presence of wee Montreal Canadiens center Saku Koivu, a foxy playmaker, and Anaheim Mighty Ducks right wing Teemu Selanne, top goal scorer in the N.H.L. as I write. The Czech to watch is sniper Jaromir Jagr, right wing of the Pittsburgh Penguins, and the team will benefit from Buffalo Sabres goalie Dominik Hasek in the nets, but they are thin on the bench. I doubt that the Americans can repeat their 1980 "Miracle on Ice," but they will be blessed with some formidable sharpshooters. Philadelphia Flyers left wing John LeClair, New York Rangers center Pat LaFontaine, and Phoenix Coyotes left wing Keith Tkachuk among them. The gold medal is Canada's to lose. The gifted Rangers center, Wayne Gretzky, should settle down a team that includes Anaheim left wing Paul Kariya, arguably the most talented player in the game today, as well as Colorado center Joe Sakic, Detroit center Steve Yzerman, and Boston Bruins defenseman Ray Bourque, with Colorado's Patrick Roy and the New Jersey Devils' Martin Brodeur alternating in the nets.

Whatever. Like other undernourished fans, I anticipate some compelling hockey in Nagano, maybe even a vintage game or two. ☐

TEAM CANADA

Left to right, Detroit Red Wings left wing Brendan Shanahan and center Steve Yzerman, New Jersey Devils goaltender Martin Brodeur and defenseman Scott Stevens. Team Canada is looking to win its first Olympic gold in hockey since 1952.



ANYTHING



A HEAD FOR FIGURES

A 1951 Paramount publicity shot of Edith Head, the studio's chief costume designer. *Opposite,* at the 1954 Academy Awards, Head shows off her controversial Oscar for Billy Wilder's *Sabrina* to her pal Grace Kelly, who won best actress for *The Country Girl.*

FOR OSCAR

Edith Head, subject of next month's gala tribute by the Motion Picture & Television Fund Foundation, was Hollywood's most successful costume designer. From 1938 to 1967 she ruled at Paramount, working on more than 1,000 movie wardrobes, earning 35 Oscar nominations, and winning eight Academy Awards. Chronicling her triumphs, AMY FINE COLLINS discovers that Head's supreme talent lay in manipulating the stars she dressed—and her own public image



As an ailing Edith Head, dowager costume designer and winner of more Oscars than any woman in Hollywood history, lay in her sickbed at Los Angeles's Good Samaritan Hospital, she received a telephone call from David Chierichetti, a young protégé currently working on her biography. "It was the day before she died," he recalls, "and Edith stayed on for a long time. Before hanging up she said, 'David, you've got to get out of the movie business. It's not for you.' I asked why and she answered, 'Because you don't know how to lie.' That must have been one of the last things she said."

The memorial service for Edith, who succumbed to a progressive blood disease on Saturday, October 24, 1981, was held at Beverly Hills' Good Shepherd Catholic Church four days later, on what would have been her 84th birthday. Cutters, fitters, sewers, costume designers, cameramen, makeup artists, commissary employees, and studio guards filed into the house of worship, as did a constellation of stars. There was Elizabeth Taylor, whom Edith had dressed as a devastating debutante in *A Place in the Sun* (1951), and who had bunked at the designer's house in 1973 when her marriage to Richard Burton was disintegrating. There was Loretta Young, whom she had enveloped in ethereal negligees for *The Perfect Marriage* (1946). Also paying last respects were Roddy McDowall, whom she had costumed in 1973's *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean;* Jane Wyman, who had cajoled the designer into playing a cameo part in the fashion-world weeper *Lucy Gallant* (1955); and George Peppard, whose *Breakfast at Tiffany's* wardrobe she had supervised in 1961.

At McDowall's suggestion, Bette Davis—who admired Edith's work so much she kept the designer's sketch of her Margo Channing cocktail dress from *All About Eve* on permanent display in her home—gave Edith's eulogy. "A queen has left us," Davis began with a rousing rhetorical flourish. "The queen of her profession. She will never be replaced." There were some in attendance, however, who felt Davis's panegyric veered uncomfortably toward hyperbole. "When we heard Bette say the queen is dead, we all turned to each other and said, 'What? What?'" recalls one venerable costume designer. Another colleague, Donfeld, explains in the memoir he is writing, "Edith was not untalented—but she was ruthless. . . . She was a survivalist—a real diplomat and politician." Designer Noel Taylor elaborates: "Look, there's no question Edith grew into a talent. But she certainly didn't start out that way."

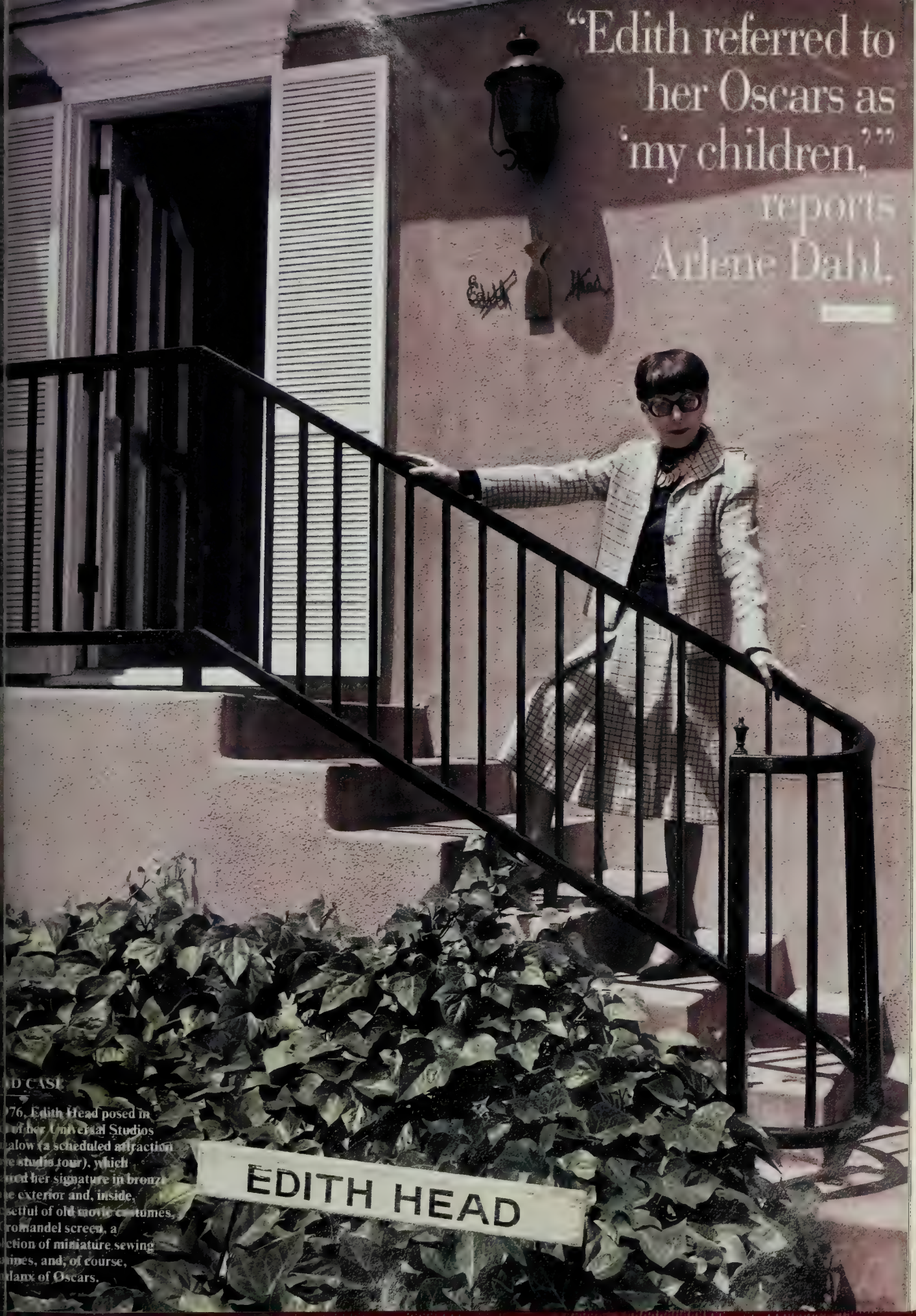
Exactly how Edith Head—35 times nominated for an Oscar, 8 times a winner, and a veteran, she calculated, of 1,131 films—"started out" was a secret she guarded as vigilantly as her chief-designer position at Paramount and, later, Universal. She obstinately refused to talk about her background except in the vaguest or most fanciful terms. Edith admitted, "I have in my mind a special room with iron doors. The things I don't like I throw in there and slam the iron door."

Paddy Calistro, while researching her biography, *Edith Head's Hollywood* (Dutton, 1983), unearthed the basic fact that the designer was born in the mining town of San Bernardino, California, in 1897 (10 years earlier than she claimed), to parents almost certainly of Jewish heritage (an ethnicity she hid), Anna Levy and Max Posener. Though Edith recounted in her 1959 memoir, *The Dress Doctor* (Little, Brown), that her father was a "Latin scholar," he in fact was a bankrupt dry-goods merchant who fled to Texas soon after Edith's inauspicious birth. Edith, however, was perfectly candid on one subject: her dissatisfaction with her appearance. "I always wanted to look like Shirley Temple," she said. "But the mirror told me I was a zero with thick glasses and straight hair. It was years before I had any confidence."

In the teens Edith made her home in Los Angeles and graduated in 1917 from Los Angeles High School. Availing herself of her only resource—her native intelligence—Edith enrolled in th University of California, Berkeley, grad uating in two years with honors i French. From there she went to Stan ford for a master's degree in French after which she took a position teach ing the language at the Bishop's Schoo in La Jolla. Edith's next job, at th Hollywood School for Girls, took he back to Los Angeles. "I think Edit learned how to handle stars from teach ing all those Hollywood brats," says cos tume designer Gayle Baizer, Edith' sketch artist during the late 60s. In 192 when her duties were suddenly expande to include art courses, Edith enrolle in night-school art classes at Otis an then Chouinard—a shrewd decision tha not only gave her grist for her curriculun but altered her life permanently.

While attending Chouinard she be friended a classmate named Betty Head "At one of our school dances," Edit recalled in *The Dress Doctor,* "I me her brother, Charles. . . . He was a bri liant young man with every promise o a bright future and we were marrie after a long, rather intellectual corre spondence." Edith put more faith i him than he warranted. A salesman fo the Super Refined Metals Company i Southern California, he was not a de pendable provider and spent a goo deal of his time on the road. Once es tablished in Hollywood, Edith rarel uttered his name to journalists or even friends, so it is surprising she ac knowledged him at all in her book, i only in passing. After 15 years of mar riage, Edith sued Charles for divorc in 1938, complaining that her husban "indulged in the use of intoxicating drink to such an extent that it . . . has in flicted . . . great mental anguish."

During the summer ho iday of 1923, Edith no ticed a classified ad i the *Los Angeles Time* WANTED: SKETCH ART IST . . . WORK FOR C. B DE MILLE. WRITE HOW ARD GREER FOR AP POINTMENT. Howard Greer, a worldly Nebraska-born couturier, had arrive in Hollywood just six months earlie and became chief designer for Famou Players–Lasky (soon to become Para mount Pictures). Edith already knew all about DeMille; his daughters wer her pupils at the Hollywood Schoo



D CAST

76, Edith Head posed in
of her Universal Studios
alow (a scheduled attraction
e studio tour), which
ned her signature in bronze
e exterior and, inside,
ctful of old movie costumes,
romandel screen, a
ction of miniature sewing
ines, and, of course,
lanx of Oscars.









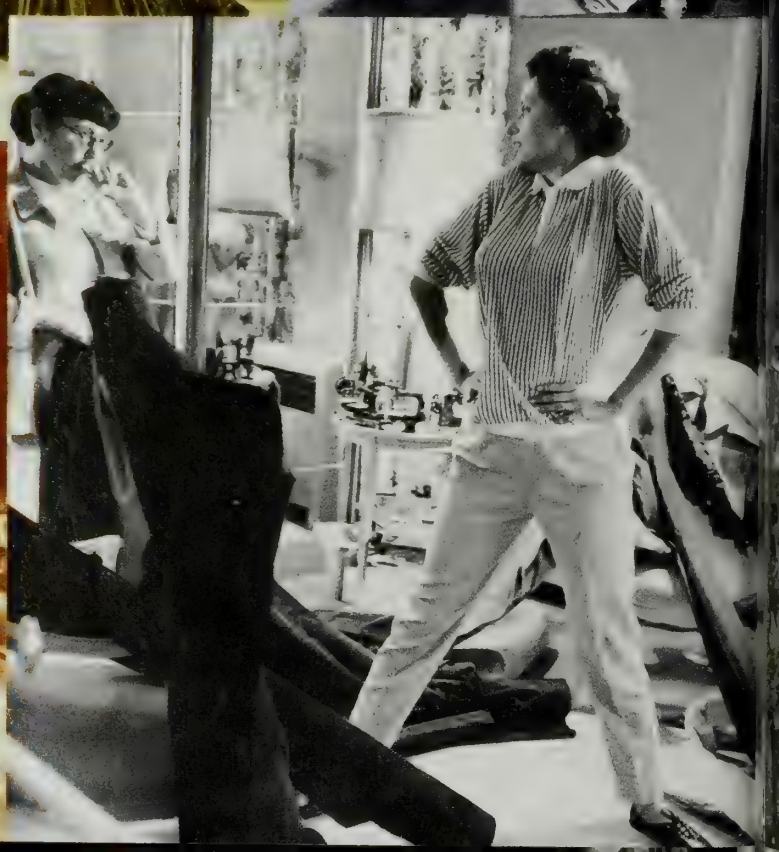




HEAD OF HER CLASS

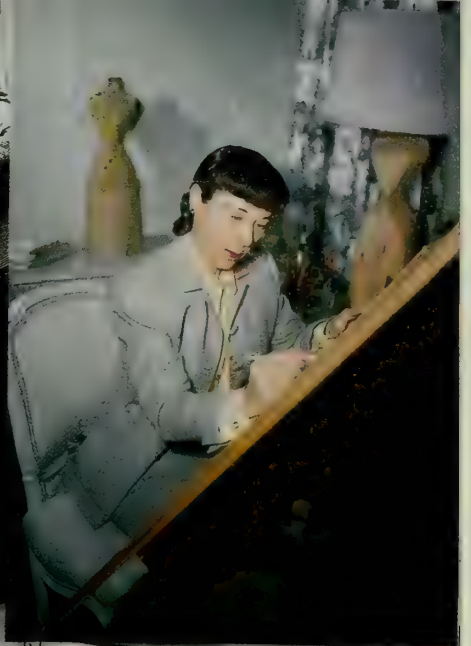
This page, clockwise from above: Edith Head at home with husband Bill Ihnen; Dorothy Lamour in an Edith-designed "jungle kimono" for the 1936 film *The Jungle Princess;* Barbara Stanwyck, decked out in one of the designer's tarty creations for Billy Wilder's *Double Indemnity,* 1944; Edith reviews costume sketches for *To Catch a Thief* with Grace Kelly, 1955; Bette Davis with Gary Merrill in 1950's *All About Eve;* Edith inspects fabric and Sophia Loren during a wardrobe check for *The Black Orchid,* 1958; Grace Kelly in *To Catch a Thief*'s gold masquerade dress; and Ginger Rogers in the $35,000 ranch-mink dress for *Lady in the Dark,* 1944.



















A HEAD OF HER TIMES

This page, clockwise from top left: during the filming of Billy Wilder's *Sunset Boulevard*, Gloria Swanson poses with Edith Head, who designed the actress's Norma Desmond costumes, 1950; Shirley MacLaine modeling a Head creation designed for the 1958 Academy Awards; at the drawing board in her Paramount suite in the 1940s; examining the wardrobe for *Miss Tatlock's Millions* in the Paramount workroom, 1947; director Alfred Hitchcock consults with his longtime costume designer (they worked on 11 films together) on the set of his last movie, *Family Plot*, 1976; Edith relaxes in Mexican-style folk garb at Casa Ladera, her Coldwater Canyon home; and tending to Elizabeth Taylor for George Stevens's *A Place in the Sun*, for which Edith won her fourth Oscar, 1951.

for Girls. Determined to get a job for which she had no qualifications—it would pay her $50 a week, double her teaching salary—Edith showed up for her interview dressed "to suggest the Latin Quarter," she recalled, and armed with a portfolio even more fraudulent. "A young girl . . . appeared with a carpetbag full of sketches," Howard Greer wrote in his witty 1949 memoir, *Designing Male.* "There were architectural drawings, plans for interior decoration, magazine illustrations, and fashion designs. Struck dumb with admiration for anyone possessed of such diverse talents, I hired the gal on the spot." The next morning, however, fear of discovery forced the truth out of Greer's bespectacled new assistant. "I just went through the art school where I've been studying," Edith confessed to her new boss, "and picked up everybody's sketches I could lay my hands on!" Noel Taylor, a friend of Greer's, says, "When Howard learned the truth, he had sympathy. He thought she might have ideas."

In 1924, Paramount imported from New York a second designer, Travis Banton. Friends rather than rivals, Greer and Banton cheerfully divided up Paramount assignments and even opened a boutique together on Sunset Boulevard. "Banton and Greer sort of adopted me," Edith said revealingly. "There was never any feeling that I would be a threat to them, as is so often the case in boss-and-assistant relationships." Greer left Paramount in 1927 to open a shop of his own on what is now Rodeo Drive. But if the mischievous couturier (he delighted in giving the dresses in his salon such impudent names as "Ass in a Sling" and "Tits on the Half-Shell") had lingered any longer at Paramount, studio president Jesse Lasky probably would have tossed him out anyway. Like Edith's own husband, Charles—who sometimes joined them in their bacchanalian revels—"Howard and Travis were both in trouble with liquor," says Noel Taylor.

Now under Banton's exclusive tutelage, Edith studied his every move as he concocted signature looks for Paramount's Three Graces: Marlene Dietrich, whom he kept swaddled in sumptuous laces, exotic feathers, and precious furs; Carole Lombard, for whom he devised slinky bias-cut satin sheaths; and Claudette Colbert, whose trademark neck-lengthening "Colbert co[illegible]" he invented. "Travis knew how to talk to the stars—how to make them feel absolutely beautiful in his clothes," Edith explained. "I learned everything from him. . . . He was training me to be a full-fledged designer."

In 1932, while Banton was in France searching for fabrics and viewing the couture collections, Edith took on a movie that brought the novice her first screen credit—*She Done Him Wrong* (1933), pairing a juvenile Cary Grant with a bedizened Mae West. The voluptuous comedienne instructed Edith, "I want my clothes loose enough to prove I'm a lady, but tight enough to show 'em I'm a woman." Thanks in no small part to Edith's collaborative efforts with West, the film broke records, grossing $2 million in under three months and almost single-handedly saving Paramount from bankruptcy.

When he passed along one of his discards—Barbara Stanwyck—to Edith, Banton unwittingly reshaped the destiny of both women. "The film was *Internes Can't Take Money,* 1937," says designer Nolan Miller, a close friend of the late actress's. "Banton wasn't very excited about it. Edith and Barbara became immediate friends." Stanwyck soon had Edith written into all her contracts, an arrangement that allowed Edith to work outside Paramount for the first time. "Edith made Barbara feel very secure," Miller says. Like all the stars Edith would come to dress, Stanwyck discovered that the tiny powerhouse of Paramount wardrobe could be trusted completely. "Everything went in and nothing came out," says British costume designer Anthony Powell. "She was like blotting paper."

And Stanwyck had further reason to pledge her loyalty to Edith after the designer smothered her in rhinestones and gold lamé as the title character in *The Lady Eve* (1941). With this dual role, in which the actress played both a frisky con artist and a *comme il faut* aristocrat, Stanwyck shed her sartorially lackluster image and transformed into a sex symbol. Edith had mastered the one figure problem [illegible] had prevented other designers from seeing Stanwyck's potential as clotheshorse—her low-slung butt. "[illegible] widening the waistbands on the fro[illegible] of her gowns and narrowing the[illegible] slightly in back," Edith said, she c[illegible]ated "an optical illusion that her d[illegible]rière was just as pertly placed as a[illegible] other star's." With director Billy Wild[illegible] guiding her, Edith again re-created Sta[illegible]wyck, this time as a femme fatale floo[illegible] in *Double Indemnity* (1944), the [illegible] chetypal *film noir.* With her déclas[illegible] ankle bracelet, "she was supposed [illegible] be dressed like one of the sleazy wo[illegible]en living on Los Feliz Boulevard [illegible] says Wilder.

Stanwyck found a multitude of wa[illegible] to express her gratitude to her fashi[illegible] guru. In interviews she lauded her [illegible] every opportunity—"Stanwyck was lil[illegible] a press agent for Edith Head," sa[illegible] producer A. C. Lyles, formerly in Par[illegible]mount publicity. And, Donfeld recal[illegible] the star routinely gave presents of Edith[illegible] custom-made pin-tucked and fagot[illegible] silk blouses to possibly the most vi[illegible]ble status arbiter at Paramount—Paulin[illegible] the matronly *maîtresse d'* at the stud[illegible] commissary. Stanwyck also finally pe[illegible]suaded Edith to correct an unsight[illegible]dental defect—two missing incisors—th[illegible] had caused her no end of shame. [illegible] simply disciplined myself," Edith sai[illegible] "I never smiled; I was very seriou[illegible] horn-rimmed, dead-pan." Stanwyc[illegible] dragged the poker-faced designer [illegible] Dr. Charles L. Pincus—"the same de[illegible]tist who did Shirley Temple's little bridg[illegible] when she lost her teeth," Nolan Mill[illegible] says—and bought her a brand-new s[illegible] of teeth. The cosmetic overhaul "change[illegible] my life, or at least my personality," Edith maintained—yet she never entire[illegible] lost the habit of suppressing her smil[illegible]

Edith was thriving at the studio[illegible] her initial salary of $50 a week ha[illegible] risen in 10 years to $175 and by 193[illegible] it had escalated to $275. Though Ba[illegible]ton's work continued to be surpassingl[illegible] inventive—his last film with Dietrich[illegible] 1937's *Angel,* included a beaded, gem[illegible] studded, and fur-trimmed evening su[illegible] that set the studio back $8,000—h[illegible] personal behavior became erratic. O[illegible] on a bender, he would spend days ci[illegible]cling Los Angeles on streetcars, or wak[illegible] up to find himself in such distan[illegible] towns as San Francisco or Chicag[illegible] Oleg Cassini, a Paramount designe[illegible] from 1940 to 1942, says, "Travis Ban[illegible]ton, poor guy, he was drunk all th[illegible]

me. Edith would report immediately anyone who would listen that he as AWOL, on a binge. Her position as that she was the reliable, effective ie. Travis had no defense." In March 38, Paramount chose not to renew anton's contract, and so his former etch artist ascended to the post of ief costume designer. "There was fanfare . . . no popping of champgne corks," Edith said. "No formal nouncement was made by the studio until the fall of 1938."

In spite of the quiet manner in which Paramount handled the transition—or maybe because of it—rumors flared up that Banton's cunning disciple had somehow masterminded her teacher's dismissal. "Edith nudged him out the oor," says jewelry and set designer ony Duquette, a Banton friend. "But avis made it easy for her because he as so self-destructive." In Edith's dense, Carole Lombard fumed, "Nonnse. She loved him as much as ybody"—and doubtless she did.

"I inherited Banton's beautiful, big, perelegant office," Edith said. "I had ur expert fitters, and drapers, beads, finishers, cutters, each with a staff der her. . . . I was lucky." Oleg Cassini remembers, "The Paramount workom was very vast; long like a hall in hotel, with 40 or 50 workers. Edith d her own suite." At the former schoolarm's disposal was a glittering stockom overflowing with the most sumptous fabrics and trimmings, "not unce anything I've seen in legendary eliers in Paris or Rome," Donfeld reounts. "It was paradise on earth."

New privileges and position notwithnding, Edith continued her routine "working six days a week, fifteen urs a day"—a schedule necessitated the 40 to 50 films to which she ntributed yearly between the late s and early 40s. "It was a terribly ugh job," Edith said. Though she felt e "had been so well trained there as nothing I couldn't do," to comete her education the studio sent her Paris in 1938—the ex-French school's first trip abroad.

Back at Paramount, Edith, always ept at assimilating the good ideas of hers, revamped her suite with antiqued rrors and silver-leaf French Provincial furniture to resemble a chic Paris couturière's salon. And she adopted a uniform, virtually static through four decades, of neutral-colored, strictly tailored suits. Around the time of her promotion to design chief Edith also grew out her "Dutch flapper bob," and from then on, the hairdo too remained immutable. Though Edith griped that her self-imposed look (finished off with goggle-like dark glasses) made her resemble "an outraged owl," she prided herself on having her own "trademark," not unlike Hedda Hopper and her hats or Grace Kelly and her white gloves.



DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Edith confers with Audrey Hepburn at Paramount Studios, March 1953, just after the actress's first Hollywood picture, *Roman Holiday* (for which they each won an Oscar). Edith never got over the fact that the young starlet preferred to wear Givenchy on- and offscreen.

Edith's odd appearance did not necessarily act as a deterrent to the opposite sex. Having obtained her divorce from Charles Head, Edith found a devoted friend in Wiard "Bill" Ihnen, an architect and Paramount art director whom she had met in 1933 on the set of Mitchell Leisen's *Cradle Song*. A pal of James Cagney, whose house he built, Ihnen went on to distinguish himself with two Academy Awards, the first for *Wilson* (1944), the second for *Blood on the Sun* (1945). "I always figured he was a confirmed bachelor," says production designer Robert Boyle. "Then I noticed he was with Edie a lot. The next thing I know they married! Everyone was surprised."

On September 8, 1940, Ihnen, 52, and Edith, 42—gaily attired in a handwoven red-and-yellow dress and sombrero—flew in a four-seater to Las Vegas for their impromptu nuptials. The couple eventually bought a rambling hacienda called Casa Ladera, at 1700 Coldwater Canyon, situated on more than five sloping acres. (MGM costume master Walter Plunkett joked that her estate was "surrounded by a picket fence made of nothing but Oscars!") Convinced that "every woman should marry a superb architect and decorator," Edith gladly gave her husband free rein CONTINUED ON PAGE 239

Edith was the only one who could both be "subservient and behave like a star."

Jocelyne and Alec Wildenstein, photographed for *Vanity Fair*. She is seen at the Wildenstein town house on Manhattan's Upper East Side, January 11, 1998; he, at midtown's Four Seasons Hotel, December 16, 1997.

BITTER

SPOILS

he messy, scandal-sheet divorce pro: ·edings
·tween Alec and Jocelyne Wildenstein
ay open the door on the secret history of
ıe art world's richest and most powerful family.
·om the intelligence network the Wildensteins
·eated to accusations they collaborated
ith the Nazis, to the legendary contents of their
ıults in New York and Switzerland,
JZANNA ANDREWS explores four generations
' an insular art-dealing dynasty whose
5 billion fortune, Gulfstream IV, racing
able, private Virgin Island compound, and
5,000-acre Kenya ranch cannot erase
e rancorous legacy handed down
om father to son to son

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONATHAN BECKER

Last September, Daniel Wildenstein's family celebrated his 80th birthday with a party at the two-star restaurant Laurent, one of Paris's most fashionable spots. It was an intimate dinner, for about 70 guests, to which Daniel's 64-year-old second wife, Sylvia, had invited only her husband's closest friends and his family, whose members had flown in for the occasion from New York, Montreal, and Palm Beach, some of them on the family's private Gulfstream IV. Daniel's two sons, Alec, 57, and Guy, 52, and Guy's wife, Kristina, were there, as were all six of his grandchildren. Most of the friends in attendance that night were from the horse-racing world, trainers and jockeys who had worked with the Wildensteins over the years. Horse racing was the old man's passion, and his stable, Allez France, is considered among the best in Europe.

Almost no one from the international art world was there, even though there were few people in that world whom Daniel Wildenstein, probably the richest and most powerful art dealer on earth, didn't know. Wildenstein, always aloof from his peers, rarely ventured out in recent years, except for regular excursions to the track and his office.

As friends and family toasted him that night, Daniel appeared relaxed and happy. It was an evening devoted to celebration, and there was a lot to celebrate. So many things had turned out as he had planned. In the three and a half decades since he had taken over the 123-year-old family business from his father, Georges, Daniel had added greatly to the luster of the Wildenstein name and also amassed enormous wealth; estimated at more than $5 billion, his fortune was the only one of that magnitude ever made in the art market. People didn't trifle with him or with his family, over which he maintained an iron control.

They said behind his back that he was "mean," "ruthless," and "frightening," but few really knew him, because that was how he wanted it. Other families had their public scandals, but his did not. Over the years he had made sure very little had been written about it in the press. After all, he sold art to some of the world's greatest collectors—Mellons, Annenbergs, David-Weills—people who valued secrecy and privacy as much as he did. His family's vaults, hidden around Europe and America, contained one of the largest private collections of masterpieces in the world. It is believed that some of the paintings have not been seen in decades by anyone except Wildensteins—there is a rumor of a long-hidden Vermeer, and, according to Alec Wildenstein, Georges used to travel with a rolled-up Velázquez which was virtually unknown.

Daniel seemed determined to enjoy his birthday party as if nothing were wrong. But things *were* going wrong. Several days earlier, Alec had been arrested and thrown jail, charged with threatening his estranged wife, Jocelyn with a gun in their bedroom in the family's Manhatta town house. The next morning, Alec's face, haggard aft a night in prison, was plastered across the tabloids. (S "Jocelyne's Revenge," on page 244.)

Ever since the news of Alec and Jocelyne's bitter divor broke, three months before the birthday party, the pre had been filled with stories about the Wildenstein famil Friends were stunned that they were finally making hea lines. Some blamed Jocelyne for leaking information to th press. "It's her way of taking revenge on people who ne er, never have their names in the paper," says a friend Sylvia's. Daniel, faced with the unprecedented situation a loose cannon, seemed to be doing exactly the wror thing: he declared war on Jocelyne, cutting off her cred cards and trying to have her barred from the family homes, including the New York town house, the Châtea de Marienthal (reportedly the largest private residence i metropolitan Paris), the 66,000-acre Kenya ranch, and th family's private island compound in the British Virgins.

But Jocelyne refused to be intimidated. After 19 years i the family, she had a powerful trump card: the stories n one had ever heard. Among those who seemed to be in terested were the F.B.I. and the New York State tax au thorities, which, sources close to Jocelyne say, have alread been in touch with her. The entire art world was rivete "Jocelyne could be the thread that unravels the whole sweater says a collector who has known the Wildensteins for tw decades. "She could open up the whole story."

On September 3, the day Alec was released from jai *The New York Times* ran a story about artworks that ha been stolen by the Nazis in 1940 and discovered recentl in the possession of the Wildensteins. The report migh have passed with little notice had it not been for Daniel comment to the newspaper that because the victims hadn come forth at the time they had no rights now. The re mark was so "absolutely unbelievable, so breathtakingl unbelievable," as one prominent art dealer put it, that created a second controversy. People had whispered fo years about the origins of the Wildenstein collection—tha despite their being French Jews themselves, they had mad money by trafficking in art looted by the Nazis. The fam ily has always dismissed such talk. "If you think somethin is ridiculous, why even comment on it?" says Alec.

The Wildenstein gallery on East 64th Stree is the most sumptuous private gallery i New York. Built for the family in 1932 b Horace Trumbauer, whose firm also bui the Widener library at Harvard and the Phila delphia Art Museum, the Louis XVI–styl town house, down the street from the fam ily's Manhattan home, features a receptio area with soaring 30-foot ceilings, marble floors, and grand staircase that was modeled on the one in the Wilder steins' headquarters in Paris, an 18th-century *hôtel part culier* on the Rue de la Boétie. In the basement, and i those of the three adjoining buildings, which the Wilder



"Daniel went to his father's grave every All Saints' Day and beat the ground with his fists."

steins are believed to own, are ead-lined vaults. At one point, their inven- ory was said to include some 400 Italian rimitives, two Botticellis, eight paintings ach by Rembrandt and Rubens, three Ve- izquezes, nine El Grecos, five Tinto- ettos, 79 Fragonards, and seven Watteaus, ot to mention an enormous collection f Impressionist paintings. No other art ealer in the world today has the stock f paintings and sculptures that the Vildensteins do. "If it's obtainable pri- ately," says one prominent art collec- or, "the Wildensteins will have it. No ne has their resources."

In March 1997, James Marrow, a professor of art history at Princeton, was invited to the New York gallery to examine eight rare illuminated medieval manuscripts worth several million dollars. He had been asked to do so by am Fogg, a London dealer, who was inter- sted in purchasing one or more of the works. Marrow remembers being awed by the beauty of ne sacred books as he sat in one of the gallery's pstairs viewing rooms, but he was also con- erned. "I saw the numbers immediately," he says, eferring to reddish pencil markings, "ka," followed y the numbers 879 through 886, of the kind made y the Nazis on artworks they had stolen. Marrow ays he guessed that the numbers indicated that at me point the manuscripts had belonged to the Kann mily, important French Jewish art collectors. But he ouldn't tell which member of the large Kann family ad owned them or when. Joseph Baillio, the Wilden- eins' respected expert in 18th-century French art, also eemed confused about who had owned the manuscripts. He said he thought it was the Kanns, but he didn't say hich one. He looked at registration cards and went t





UNSTILL LIVES

From top: Daniel (in foreground) and Georges at an art auction, circa 1961. Alec with artworks from the Wildensteins' lead-lined vaults, which are located around the world: sites include Switzerland, a nuclear bunker in upstate New York, and a converted Manhattan firehouse. The New York gallery, on East 64th Street, 1997.

the gallery's library to check, but he kept saying he didn't know," says Marrow. "I knew, with a dealer, that's not right." (Baillio denies ever speaking with Marrow about the previous owners of the manuscripts.)

Unable to get a clear proof of title from the dealer, Fogg ultimately backed out. In the meantime, a German manuscript expert Marrow had contacted sent back notes from the Nazi archives in Koblenz. They described the manuscripts in detail and listed them as part of the art collection of Alphonse Kann, stolen by the Nazis from his home near Paris in October 1940 after he had fled to London. Marrow contacted Kann's great-nephew, Francis Warin, in Paris. He was shocked to learn that Warin already knew the Wildensteins had the manuscripts—thanks to an investigation by Hector Feliciano, the author of the groundbreaking 1995 book *The Lost Museum,* about art looted from French Jews by the Nazis. Warin had been trying to get them back, and it was in the midst of this effort that the Wildensteins, having held the manuscripts in their vaults for more than 40 years, had tried to sell them.





LANDSCAPE . . .

Left: Alec, then girlfriend Maria Kimberly, and future stepmother Sylvia at the Longchamp racetrack, 1967. *Below:* Daniel, Sylvia, and Alec at the Hôtel Majestic, Cannes, 1963. As a teenager, Alec would carouse with his father at brothels.

"Daniel used to scream at Alec until Alec would get sick in the bathroom of the yacht."

The Wildensteins had rejected Warin's claim. First, Guy Wildenstein had written to say the manuscripts had been bought by his grandfather Georges from Alphonse Kann "before the Second World War." A later response from a Wildenstein attorney insisted that three of the manuscripts had been bought not from Alphonse Kann but from Edouard Kann, a distant cousin, in 1909. Either way, the Wildensteins contended, the manuscripts had been stolen by the Germans from *their* Paris gallery—not from Alphonse Kann's home—and returned to them after the war.

In September, Daniel Wildenstein gave *The New York Times* yet a different story. He said the manuscripts had been bought from Edouard Kann by Georges Wildenstein's father, Nathan, sometime between 1903 and 1914, and he had documents to prove it. He said they had been looted not from the gallery, but from a Wildenstein vault at the Banque de France and then returned after the war. Stunningly, he dismissed the "ka" markings as insignificant. "I can't understand the claim," he said. "It's an absolutely crazy thing, 100 years after an object was bought to come with a claim without any paper whatsoever. They claim it 50 years later? They had no claim for 50 years? I tell you something. If tomorrow someone steals a picture from me, I make a declaration to the police that it's stolen. After 30 years, the man who stole it owns it."

In December, Alec Wildenstein agreed to meet with *Vanity Fair* to talk about the Kann manuscripts, and about his family and their history. It is one CONTINUED ON PAGE 250



... WITH SECRETS

The Wildensteins' Paris gallery, 1941. During World War II it was run by "the worst of the collaborationists among the dealers," according to an O.S.S. interrogator.



POOCHY
Jocelyne Wildenstein with her five Italian greyhounds in the Bonnard Room of the family's 14-room Manhattan town house, January 11, 1998. The mother of the litter is on the far right, tethered by a Chanel leash.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN BECKER



Jocelyne's Revenge

His-and-her plastic surgery, tigers in a bulletproof glass cave, and a $350,000 Chanel dress—what could be more over-the-top than the marriage of Alec and Jocelyne Wildenstein? Their divorce: a jet-fueled farrago complete with ebony coffin, naked blonde, and loaded pistol.

GEORGE RUSH reports

Jocelyne Wildenstein figured there might be trouble. Three days earlier, on August 31, her estranged husband, Alec, had faxed her a letter at their ranch in Kenya, Ol Jogi, where she had been living for several months. "It is impossible for me to let you come in at #11," Alec wrote, alluding to their 14-room Manhattan town house on East 64th Street. "[I will] be entertaining at home this week."

Jocelyne went anyway. Just before midnight on September 2, she arrived at the town house with her two bodyguards. What happened next depends on whom you ask.

Jocelyne says that when she and her assistant went upstairs to the couple's bedroom Alec appeared at the door wearing only a towel. Once he saw her, Jocelyne says, Alec grabbed a loaded nine-mm. semi-automatic and aimed it at her—and continued to do so even after the bodyguards identified themselves. Jocelyne also says she "glimpsed" a naked blonde woman in the bedroom. Alec disagrees, insisting that Jocelyne was downstairs when he first saw the bodyguards, whom he mistook for burglars. Once he discovered who they were, Alec says, he quickly put the gun away.

In the end, Alec left the town house—in handcuffs—after one of Jocelyne's bodyguards called the police. "I will see you are out on the streets!" Alec reportedly shouted as police led him away on charges of menacing. He spent 16 long hours in custody, some of it at Manhattan's infamous Tombs, where cellmates had plenty to say about the jailbird wearing an Armani suit and a Légion d'Honneur lapel pin. "That day," Alec says of Jocelyne, "I broke









SOMETHING WILDENSTEIN
From top: a trainer with the Wildensteins' horses (and helicopter) at the château in Igny, France. The horses in Chantilly, France. Maria Kimberly, a tracker, and Alec bag an antelope in Chad, 1968. Alec aboard the *Southern Breeze* off the British Virgin Islands. *Opposite:* a shot from Yelena Jarikova's fashion portfolio.

"My father checks things o

off all feeling for her."

It was also the day when the art world's wealthiest, most secretive family became tabloid fodder. Alec and Jocelyne's messy, very public divorce is seamy enough, with its charges of adultery, greed, and gunplay. Photographs of Jocelyne's once delicate face, stretched freakishly tight by plastic surgery, have only heightened the scrutiny and ridicule. (New York's *Daily News* dubbed her "The Bride of Wildenstein.") Worse, the divorce has earned the wrath of family patriarch Daniel Wildenstein.

It was in 1977, while on safari with friends in Kenya, that Jocelyn fell in love with Alec, who was there to inspect his family's 66,000-acre ranch. "A lion had to be killed at a neighbor's ranch," Alec recalls. "The night before, Jocelyne asked, 'Could I go with you?' I said, 'As long as you keep your mouth shut.'"

At dawn, they sat wordlessly, waiting for the big cat. Alec made his kill. On their first day together, they rode motorcycles to a hilltop and shared their first kiss. "It was quite intense," Jocelyne recalls.

Jocelyne was a 31-year-old knockout—"an exciting woman," Alec says. She'd grown up in Lausanne, Switzerland, the daughter of a struggling department-store buyer. She'd moved to Paris before she was 20 and had already spent a decade exploring Africa. And she had a boyfriend: European filmmaker Sergio Gobbi, whom she'd been dating for five years.

Alec was also involved. Since 1965, he'd been living in Paris with Maria Kimberly, a Ford model who'd starred in Jacques Tati's comedy *Traffi*. "That relationship stopped the mo ment I saw Jocelyne," Alec says. The eloped to Las Vegas on April 30, 197 Later they invited friends and famil to a second ceremony in Lausanne But Alec's father, Daniel, was cor spicuously missing. "He was agains marriage in general," says Alec.

More specifically, he was agains Jocelyne. Daniel went as far as t urge Maria Kimberly to try to win hi son back. "My father checks thing out," Alec says. "My father tried t warn me."

Warn him about what? "I have tw children," Alec hedges. "I don't wan them to hate their mother." Then, ur able to restrain himself, he asks "What was she doing before she wen out with Sergio Gobbi?"

Jocelyne has boasted that, long be fore she stepped onto the Wilden steins' Gulfstream IV, she'd flow aboard a larger jet owned by Saud arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi. Alec laughs and says, "She had been on many other jets besides Adnan Kha shoggi's." (Jocelyne says that sh had been on only one other jet a that time.)

He discounts rumors that Jocelyn had worked for Madame Claude, th famous Parisian bordello owner "My father and I were great friend with Madame Claude," says Alec. " knew all her girls. . . . She would have just told me." But, Alec adds there were other madams in Pari back then.

Asked about the rumors that sh was a courtesan, Jocelyne denies them saying, "Really? Well, they have t try to find something against me."

To which Alec replies, "She neve answered, did she?"

Jocelyne disputes the genera consensus that Daniel always kep her at arm's length. "With me," she says, "he was extra nice." Certainly they grew closer after she gave him two grandchildren, Diane and Alec ju nior. The couple spent two years in a penthouse in New York's Olympic Tower, then moved to the town house on East 64th Street.

But Jocelyne was happiest at O Jogi. "I really put my imagination and heart into it," says Jocelyne, who takes

Alec says of the marriage. "He tried to warn me."

credit for "overseeing" the ranch's 200 buildings, two swimming pools, 55 man-made lakes—and 366 servants. She also lays claim to the ranch's other extravagances, including the two tigers who live in a bulletproof glass cave near one of the pools.

Jocelyne says Alec didn't blink when she bought a $350,000 Chanel dress (designed by her and Karl Lagerfeld) and $10 million worth of jewelry—it was simply the way of a Wildenstein. For Diane's 17th birthday, they built her a $3 million mansion at Ol Jogi. In an average month, Jocelyne estimates, she and Alec would spend at least $1 million.

And then there was the plastic surgery. They'd been married about a year, Alec recalls, when Jocelyne told him his eyes looked baggy. So they went in for his-and-hers eye-lifts, but for Jocelyne it was just the beginning. "She was crazy," says Alec. "I would always find out last. She was thinking that she could fix her face like a piece of furniture. Skin does not work that way. But she wouldn't listen."

"I don't think I've known her when she wasn't healing from something," says a friend, who regrets the way Jocelyne has "mutilated herself."

Over time, Jocelyne created a ritual mask that was vaguely African and so taut that she could barely blink. Friends suspect that she's trying to look like a jungle cat. "The lynx has perfect eyes," says Jocelyne, who keeps one as a pet. But she insists her feline look comes naturally. "If I show you pictures of my grandmother," she says, "what you see is these eyes—cat eyes—and high cheekbones."

In the past, Jocelyne has claimed that she had the face-lifts because Alec "hates to be with old people." But now she admits, "He never pushed me. . . . No, he all the time told me that I look very young." She adds, "Until the day you don't look young enough!"

Ultimately, though, Jocelyne's preventive medicine may have caused what it was meant to cure. Asked if he had other lovers, Alec says, "Do you want me to brag? I'm a Frenchman." He'd been "not unhappy" during the early years with Jocelyne. There was excitement—physical excitement." Her "good health" ("very important, as I am an animal breeder") had produced two children. But aside from good health and a love of Africa, Alec says, "we had nothing in common." And once the kids had moved away to school, "the fights were constant. She was hysterical. The servants were shocked by her language and behavior." (Jocelyne says, "That is absurd. . . . We never, ever fought. Like every couple, you can have an argument.")

Last March, Jocelyne's father, Armand, died of pneumonia. Jocelyne flew to Kenya, where he'd been staying, but Alec remained in New York. "So," Jocelyne says, "I kept my father for 14 days in the fridge" until Alec could make it. Alec claims that the funeral was delayed because Jocelyne insisted on finding an ebony coffin and "a perfect burial spot—all for the sake of appearance."

"Alec gave a nice speech," Jocelyne concedes. But three weeks later, in New York, he told her the marriage was dead. Typically, they remember the day differently. Alec recalls that he was running to work when "she flew off the handle because I had changed cologne. She started calling me names. She called me at the office and said, 'I want to know why immediately.'"

Jocelyne says she simply asked if he wanted to have dinner with friends at Le Bernardin. He said no and that they needed to speak. "He told me, 'I'm dating a couple of women,'" Jocelyne claims. "I say, 'A couple of women or one? . . . Because . . . if you don't know exactly what you want, I am ready to be patient.'"

Alec says he was trying to "soften the landing" for Jocelyne. But he admits he lied that day in April. In fact, he was involved with just one woman: Yelena Jarikova, a gorgeous 21-year-old raised in Russia.

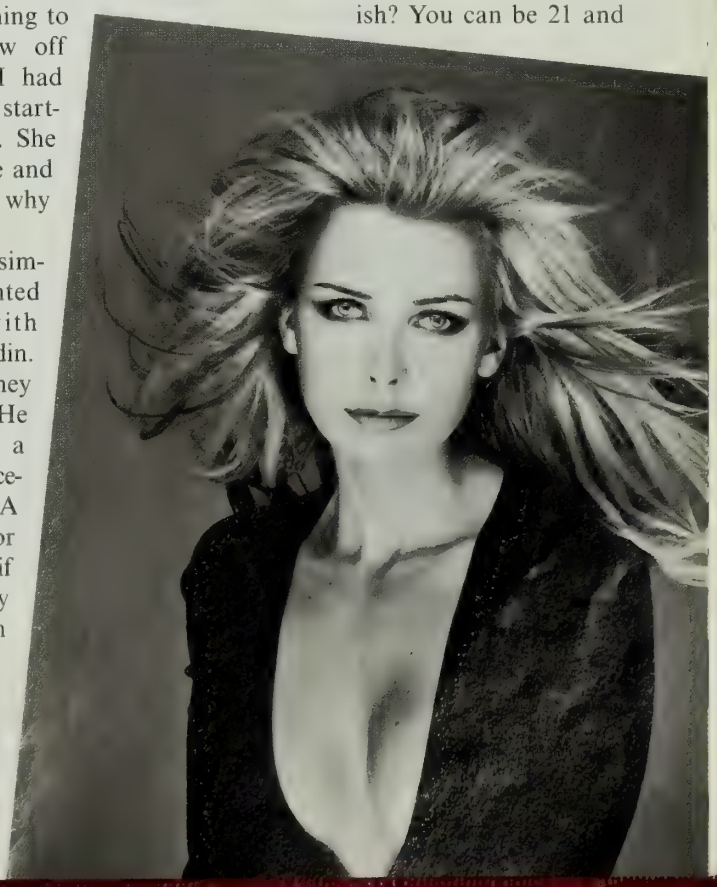
Alec fell hard for Jarikova. He says he met her a month before he told Jocelyne he was leaving, adding, "All you have to be is on the launching pad and meet somebody to make the countdown."

Jarikova was at Alec's side when his horse Peintre Célèbre won the Arc de Triomphe race in France. She took her mother and little brother to Ol Jogi.

Playing Pygmalion, Alec set about creating a supermodel. He paid fashion photographer Wayne Maser to shoot Jarikova's portfolio and asked his friend Eileen Ford to give her a modeling contract. She has since posed for *Harper's Bazaar*, walked the Chanel runway in Paris, and landed a small role in Woody Allen's upcoming film.

After meeting Jarikova, Alec became a vegetarian, began working out, and lost 57 pounds. When he couldn't shed the rest of his "old fat," he had liposuction. He also underwent nasal surgery to cure the snoring Jocelyne had long endured.

Alec dismisses those who call a 57-year-old man's devotion to a 21-year-old woman foolish. "Why foolish? You can be 21 and



have the mentality of a 50-year-old. You can be 50 and have the mentality of a 10-year-old. . . . I'm in love and I'm not ashamed."

At first, the divorce talks were cordial. But by June, Alec's attorneys were arguing that in 1978 Jocelyne had signed an agreement that stripped her of any claim to the family's wealth. And Alec said that he made only $100,000 a year and that all the properties, paintings, cars, and assets the couple had enjoyed were owned by Daniel Wildenstein.

From July to August, Jocelyne's monthly allowance of $150,000 was reduced to $50,000. Then her credit cards were canceled, her household authority undercut, and her personal accountant fired.

For Alec, the final straw was the public humiliation of September 3, when he was arrested. "On September 3, things changed," Alec says. "My father couldn't accept that, and I couldn't, either."

Criminal-court judge Martin Murphy granted Jocelyne an order of protection and the right to remain in the town house. Alec's lawyers moved for her eviction, suggesting that she might take a scissors to the Bonnards. Meanwhile, the Wildensteins changed the safe combinations, barred her from Ol Jogi (where her mother, Liliane, is being nursed for Alzheimer's), and ordered the town house's servants to ignore her.

"My husband seemingly has no more use for me," Jocelyne argued in court papers, "preferring to lavish our fortune on his girlfriend." She also admitted that she doesn't know how to turn on the town house's industrial kitchen stove. Her lawyer, Bernard Clair, demanded that Jocelyne receive "interim support" of $200,000 a month, $500,000 in legal fees, and access to all the properties and servants, and that $50 million in "security" be set aside pending the outcome of the case.

Alec's attorney Raoul Felder moved to ban media coverage of the case—not just for security reasons, but also to spare Jocelyne humiliation. He noted that her distinctive face had become the subject of international tabloid ridicule. He also cited the "Bride of Wildenstein" headline and London's *Sunday Mirror,* which had compared Jocelyne to a space alien.

In December, Alec cut off Jocelyne's cell phone after she ran up a $5,000 monthly bill. (She was convinced her house phone was bugged.) All of her guests were directed to the servants' entrance, and the kitchen staff refused to refill her bedside fruit bowl. And most of the other Wildensteins—including those who also live in the 64th Street town house—have stopped speaking to her.

But Jocelyne remains undaunted. She has hired Republican strategist Ed Rollins as her spokesman. (He promptly called the Wildensteins among the most arrogant people he'd ever met.) She seeks comfort from old friends, such as Georgette Mosbacher and Roger Tamraz, the Egyptian-born businessman who paid $300,000 for access to President Clinton. And she spent Christmas in Mustique with her plastic surgeon, Dr. Richard Coburn, who reportedly had a potential patient flee his office after seeing Jocelyne.

Perhaps inevitably, Alec and Jocelyne are now involving their children. Alec junior, 17, attended the 21st-birthday party his father threw for Jarikova at Le Cirque 2000, but Diane didn't show. Alec later requisitioned Diane's credit-card receipts because he suspected that Jocelyne was secretly using the cards.

Meantime, Alec disputes rumors that bruises on his face were made by Jarikova's friends because she suspected he'd been with another woman. (Alec says he slipped on his treadmill.) And he won't comment on talk that Jarikova has refused to sleep with him until he proposes. But, in a different conversation, he compares sex to big-game hunting. "Pulling the trigger isn't exciting," he says. "The most exciting part of love is climbing the stairs."

Today the Wildensteins' friends are left wondering wh Alec and Daniel have allowed the noi divorce to drag on so publicly. Joc lyne thinks the Wildenstein men sir ply love to mistreat women.

She blames most of Alec's probler on his complicated relationship wi Daniel—who, she says, is "angry" his son. And so, Jocelyne theorizes, Al "blames" her for his failure to becon "the favorite in his father's eyes."

"Is that an excuse to leave yo wife?" Alec asks, laughing. "If my f ther had no confidence in me, then wouldn't be working in the firm."

Alec rejects the common theo that Daniel has vowed to "never se tle" with Jocelyne, but concedes th "he's angry at the moment." No wo der: Jocelyne recently demanded full accounting of the Wildenstein international assets, and says she's bee contacted by the New York State ta authorities and the F.B.I.

Alec sneers at the increasing poss bility of a trial, which would no doul be a circus (and which would no doul open the Wildensteins to additional pu lic embarrassment). "There are no s crets in our family," he says. "Napolec tried to invade Russia. So did Hitle They both lost."

Still, Alec says he wants Jocelyne "t have a good life and find happiness. . . But I cannot forgive what she did. An maybe she can't forgive what I did."

Not yet, anyway. Jocelyne, who use to water-ski on Africa's crocodile-in fested Zambezi River, seems prepare for a long battle. And while she an Alec reload, a family friend who ha seen them on safari advises all inte ested parties to remember, "They ar both good marksmen." □





AN EYE FOR ART
Jocelyne, in the bedroom of the family's own house, January 11, 1998. *Inset:* on a Mediterranean beach in 1978—at least a decade before her eminent plastic surgeries left her with the appearance of a jungle cat.

Wildenstein

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 242 of the rare interviews on these subjects that any member of the family has ever given.

Sitting at a long table in a conference room he has rented for the meeting at the Four Seasons Hotel in Manhattan, Alec is flanked by his attorneys. He is short, like his father and brother, and he has an owlish face that makes him seem much younger than his 57 years. A little nervous now, he fingers a stack of papers in front of him, which includes notes from a conversation he had with his father to prepare for our interview. "I am speaking today," Alec says, "only because I feel there are so many crazy things said that I feel it's important to put the truth in order."

Alec makes it clear that the last few months have been difficult for his family. He is fearful that the press attention has made them vulnerable to kidnappers—or, as Jews, targets for Arab terrorists. He says he and Guy have hired security guards for Alec's two children, Diane, 18, and Alec junior, 17, and Guy's son, David, 18, and three daughters, Vanessa, 16, Olivia, 14, and Samantha, 12. As Alec views it, the Kann-manuscript controversy is linked to the furor over Jocelyne. "Let's look at it objectively. [Alphonse] Kann after the war claimed objects. None of [the manuscripts] was ever mentioned. For good reason. They were no longer in his possession," Alec says. "The person who is claiming something now is a nephew who has no idea of what he is doing. He is probably pushed by someone to create the problem. . . . He is trying to be a nuisance factor. He is doing what my wife is doing. He is thinking that, by embarrassing us, we will give him something."

"When one is the legal owner of important works of art," Francis Warin says, "it would be absurd and nonsense not to claim them from the moment one knows their actual location. It is what we are doing with all the works of art that belonged to Alphonse Kann, which we are locating and tracing now." It is true that Alphonse Kann never claimed the manuscripts after the war. He was an old man by then and he had never made an inventory of his vast art collection. "He made many claims from memory," says Feliciano, who tracked the manuscripts using Nazi looting inventories and also U.S. Army archives in Washington. Although Feliciano and Warin have so far been unable to determine how Georges Wildenstein got five of the eight manuscripts after the war, three were put on display at the French National Library in 1949 in the hopes that their owner would come forward. Kann had died in 1948, and no one from his family showed up to claim them, but Georges Wildenstein did. Despite doubts by curators at the library, they handed them over to Wildenstein. "The records indicate that he pushed hard to get them," says Feliciano.

Alec Wildenstein insists that his grandfather owned the manuscripts. Like his father, he says the family has proof of this, which it cannot divulge, because of possible legal action by the Kann heirs. Alec also contends that the "ka" markings may not have been Nazi markings at all. "I saw the Wildenstein and the Rothschild [art looted by the Nazis]," Alec says. "The Rothschild and Wildenstein [art] was done in ink. I never saw something done in pencil. . . . I don't see why the Germans would have done anything in pencil, because it's easy to erase something in pencil."

Feliciano disagrees. "This is how they marked: in pencil," he says. Despite the evidence that the Germans stole the manuscripts from the home of Alphonse Kann—including the fact that the manuscripts were listed, with the numbers attached, in a Nazi inventory of Kann's collection—probably no one today knows whether Georges Wildenstein, who died in 1963, claimed them because he believed he owned them or merely saw an opportunity and took it.

Alec was nine years old when his grandfather claimed the manuscripts, and anything he knows about the war years, he says, he was told by his father. One feels some sympathy for him as he tries to defend his grandfather and father with their version of events. In fact, friends say that this is the story of Alec's life—doing what Daniel tells him to. Indeed, in his divorce battle, Alec, nearing 60, has claimed that he has almost nothing he can call his own. His father controls all the assets, and, according to one of Jocelyne's divorce affidavits, the bills are mostly paid through a mysterious network of corporations and accounts. "I am told that none of the family businesses or properties, including the properties used exclusively by my husband and me, are in my husband's name. 'On paper' everything is owned by my elderly father-in-law or by foreign corporations," reads the affidavit.

Nor was Alec's life really his own. From the time he and his brother, Guy, were born, it was assumed they would follow their father into the family busin "I never had a choice. There was nor Alec says. "I was told from since I like this, I would be an art dealer."

Even in her anger at her husband, Jo lyne is sympathetic. "When you are and you're still the son and you're still same as when you were 17," says Jocel in her thick French accent, "when you a business so big like this . . . but you have your father behind yourself all time as the shadow, you're never y own master. When you reach 50 you l to have a certain freedom because really the time you can show you achie something."

As Alec defends his family, he see not to be terribly engaged. Like his ther, he appears not to realize how s ous the current challenges are. "Yo think, especially with all the activity w Swiss accounts and all these new qu tions about looted art, that they'd ad a mistake was made, apologize, and turn the manuscripts," says one ma New York dealer. But that, say peo who know the Wildensteins, has ne been the Wildenstein style. "They w pursue a law case to the end. They do seem to care how badly they come out it looking," says the same dealer.

"In some ways it is very difficult them to think that they are wrong," plains an old friend of Alec's, who mits that even he was taken aback by t aggressiveness of the family's respon "It is about winning," says one art pert. "Daniel has to win." A man w has worked for the Wildensteins sees differently: "They feel they are superi to other people," he says simply.

The Kann manuscript dispute is n the only controversy involving pro nance that the family has been embroil in. In 1983 an elderly German woma Gerda Dorothea DeWeerth, learned th a painting by Monet stolen from her d ing World War II had been sold to New York art collector by the Wilde steins in 1957. The painting, according a judge's ruling in the 11-year legal b tle, appeared to have been bought by t Wildensteins from a Swiss dealer nam François Reichenbach. In a 1984 depo tion, former Wildenstein president Ha Brooks indicated that the Wildenstei did not know from whom Reichenba had gotten the painting. But court doc ments revealed that there was anoth version of the painting's provenance the Wildenstein records. In his definiti five-volume catalogue raisonné on M

:t, completed in 1992, Daniel had skipped
'er Reichenbach and DeWeerth, claim-
g his family had obtained *Champs de*
é à Vetheuil directly from Monet's
:aler Durand-Ruel.

The court never addressed the prove-
ınce discrepancy, because in 1994 it up-
ld an earlier court ruling that De-
eerth had not searched hard enough for
e painting. Alec, nevertheless, insists his
ther's story was right: "What Harry
ooks knew about Monet you could put
t the head of a pin. My father was the
an who made the book on Monet. He
ırted when I was born, and it took him
years to bring it out."

Provenance is not the only gray area surrounding certain paintings sold the Wildensteins. Last October, short-before Sotheby's was to put at auction e estate of Mildred Allen, widow of ıarles Allen Jr., who was head of the ew York investment firm of Allen & ., it withdrew from the sale a painting Manet that Allen had bought from ildenstein in 1959. Art experts exam-ed the painting, *La Liseuse,* and raised estions about its authenticity. "A inting like that may not have been en in many years," says an auction-use official who examined it. "This is a al humdinger, because it is [certified as thentic] in the catalogue raisonné that ıniel Wildenstein co-wrote." Today the lidity of the painting is still in ques-n. "Our opinion and Mr. Wilden-in's opinion is that this is an authentic inting," says Thomas Bolan of Putney, ombly, Hall & Hirson, which repre-nts the Allen estate. However, as lan himself acknowledges, art experts nsulted so far do not agree, so it re-ıins off the market. "There's no reso-ion. It's still under a lot of investiga-n," says Bolan. "We're getting other inions."

Alec Wildenstein dismisses those who ubt that the painting is a Manet: "We ppen to make the book on Manet. I nk we know a bit more about Manet n either Sotheby's or Christie's."

The issue of the authenticity of Wilden-in paintings also came up in 1992 en the New York developer Arnold mowitz sued Wildenstein & Co., iming that *Peasant Laboring,* a paint-attributed to Georges Seurat that he d bought for $600,000 from the gal-y in 1987, had been questioned by a rator at New York's Metropolitan useum of Art. He also claimed that man who authenticated the painting d been paid by the Wildensteins. Ac-cording to Gumovitz's attorney, John Hughes, in 1995, the case was settled in a confidential out-of-court agreement.

In another 1992 incident, Laura Holtz, who was then the Wildensteins' photo archivist, was assigned to organize photographs of the works of the 18th-century sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon, which Wildenstein had just bought from the leading Houdon authority, Harvard Arnason. As Holtz sorted through them, she says, she checked the Wildensteins' library for references to Houdon and was shocked to find that in the margin of one monograph, next to the photo of the sculpture *Princesse Clothilde Xavier,* was the pencil marking "fake, as per Harvard Arnason."

Holtz says she immediately informed her boss, Joseph Baillio, then a vice president of Wildenstein. "He said to me, 'We can't tell Paris it's a fake. We own that Houdon, and we can't say it's a fake.'" Holtz says, "I'd written 'fake' on the file, and he said, 'Erase it!' I said, 'I can't do that,' whereupon he started screaming at me and said, 'You do what I tell you to do,' and he walked out and slammed the door."

Two months later, in the middle of an argument with Baillio, Holtz raised the issue of the fake Houdon, and she says she was fired the following day. When she told Baillio that she would tell Guy Wildenstein about the statue, she says that the towering Baillio grabbed her, severely injuring her shoulder. Holtz filed a lawsuit against Baillio and the gallery for assault and battery. Rather than settle, Wildenstein fought her all the way to a jury trial. Last June, a jury determined that Baillio had "touch[ed] the plaintiff Laura Holtz in a hostile or offensive manner," but acquitted Baillio and Wildenstein of all charges. Asked to comment, a Wildenstein spokesperson says, "Holtz's allegations were rejected by the jury, and their verdict speaks for itself." Holtz now intends to appeal the decision.

The mysteries surrounding Wildenstein artworks have been heightened by the fact that the family has sold masterpieces that scholars and collectors had long lost track of. Three years ago, the prominent investment banker and art collector Michel David-Weill is said to have paid several million dollars to acquire Jacques-Louis David's *Psyche* (circa 1780) from the Wildensteins. An old-master dealer, who had himself been searching for the painting for years, recalls that even the Louvre had no idea where it was.

In their efforts to maintain total privacy, the Wildensteins have created an operation that is a secret state unto itself. No one, not even employees, really knows what they own or where it is. In fact, the art is secreted in vaults around Switzerland, in an old nuclear bunker in upstate New York, and in a converted firehouse on New York's Upper East Side, among other places. The Wildensteins themselves can't keep track of what they own. "I mean, there are pictures I have never seen that my great-grandfather bought," Alec says. "[They are] in vaults and crazy places, in back of other things. And sometimes I go and rediscover [them]. We found a sculpture not very long ago that my father thought had been lost since my great-grandfather was dead."

A friend of the family's even claims that Daniel told her he owns an unknown painting by Vermeer—an artist by whom only 35 or 36 paintings are known, all in museums. Perhaps that is what Jocelyne is talking about when she claims there is a painting worth $100 million in the family vaults. "This painting will never drop [in price]. It is very rare. If you go to all the museums in the world, you will find only a couple of pieces," says Jocelyne, but she refuses to identify the artist.

When the Wildensteins move their artworks, they do it in their own fleet of armored cars—marked with a variety of misleading corporate names—and in private jets. "No one knows what they own, so no one knows what they sell," says a man who worked for the family until recently. "They can take a painting worth $15 million, put it on a jet for Saudi Arabia, sell it to a sheikh for cash. There's no record. No one sees what they are selling." Another ex-employee points out that the private-transportation system is useful for moving paintings around the world to take advantage of the best tax situations for clients.

The business was founded in 1875 by Nathan Wildenstein, a French Jew from the Alsatian village of Feigershein who had fled to Paris when the Prussian army invaded in 1870. Originally a tailor, Nathan ran a struggling bric-a-brac and antiques business before he turned to art dealing. He specialized in 18th-century French paintings, buying many of these works in junk shops before this artistic period became fashionable. As 18th-century French art grew enormously popular, Nathan became wealthy. Today, the family's vaults are said still to

Wildenstein

contain artworks that Nathan bought—paintings by artists such as Fragonard, Boucher, and Chardin. According to Alec, it was Nathan who opened the Wildenstein gallery in New York in 1902, the London gallery in 1925, and the Buenos Aires gallery "in 1929 or 1930." "He was a very small man with a tremendous wit. He was a great gambler," says Alec of his great-grandfather. Nathan, who died in 1934, was by all accounts a decent man who never raced his horses under his own name, because he'd once overheard spectators at a race shouting, "Rothschild is a crook," and he did not ever want to be spoken of that way.

Nathan's son, Georges, who entered the business in 1910, at the age of 18, was even more brilliant than his father. "He probably had the greatest artistic eye in the family," says a curator who knew Georges. He was also much tougher than Nathan. It was Georges who set up the Wildensteins' famous network of spies—notaries public in French villages, art historians, and auction-house employees. For a retainer, they fed him information that made the Wildensteins legendary for their ability to know what artworks were available, where they were, and at what price. "You'd be surprised who they were—very highly placed people," says a former auction-house official.

Georges was even more aggressive than his father had been at buying up art. One of the first dealers to anticipate how sought-after paintings by such Impressionists as Monet would later become, he bought their paintings in bulk. Although Georges didn't care for modern art, he helped finance a high-school friend, the famed dealer Paul Rosenberg, in his efforts to popularize Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, and Fernand Léger.

Though successful, Georges was not well liked. "He was a cold man," says a curator who knew him. "He was manipulative, manipulative," says another art expert. In 1933, according to those close to the Wildensteins, Georges and Rosenberg ended their business dealings when Rosenberg learned that his old friend had been carrying on an affair with his wife.

In early 1941, several months after the Germans invaded France, Georges fled the country with his family and set up the business headquarters in New York. "It was *sui generis,*" recalls one museum curator, "this old-style, red-velvet place." In those days, the New York gallery scene was made up of a handful of dealers—M. Knoedler & Co. and Duveen among the more prominent—and Georges quickly became one of the most formidable and controversial. In 1955 the Wildenstein gallery was accused of bugging Knoedler's telephones—in order, it was assumed, to find out its competitor's inventory and prices and also what customers were looking for. A gallery employee, the legendary salesman Jay Rousuck, confessed to having hired a private investigator to do the job. The incident may have been one reason why Georges was never invited to join the Art Dealers Association of America.

Daniel Wildenstein had started working for the gallery after getting his degree in art history from the Sorbonne in 1939. If his father had been known for his incredible eye and business acumen, Daniel would give his family something just as remarkable: the unprecedented power to write the history of art—and even rewrite it. He hired armies of scholars to create catalogues raisonnés, exhaustive books on individual artists and their works. Being the publisher of such books confers enormous power—the ability to authenticate paintings and to determine their location and the history of their ownership. Today, as a publisher of catalogues raisonnés, the Wildensteins virtually control the scholarship on many artists from Boucher to Monet.

Although the Wildenstein catalogues raisonnés are widely respected in the art world, "there has always been a cloud of suspicion [about them]," says one prominent art expert. Most notably, Georges's Gauguin catalogue raisonné was publicly denounced in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1965 by the well-known art historian Douglas Cooper. "Pedigrees and quotations have been juggled to suit private needs; and," Cooper wrote, "Gauguin's *oeuvre* has been shorn of some authentic works and adulterated with others that do not belong."

One art historian recalls, "They asked me to write a catalogue raisonné, but they wouldn't give me final authority over the contents, so I refused."

It is a cold and wet afternoon and Jocelyne Wildenstein has lit a fire in her living room in the family's New York town house. The room, with its high ceiling, gilded moldings, and silk-covered walls, is surprisingly cozy. Ten paintings by Bonnard hang on the walls. Jocelyn wearing a purple knit Chanel suit v fuchsia trim and jewelry she has desig herself—a choker, bracelet, and ring, made up of gold monkeys. Settled on of the room's couches, upholstered bright-yellow embroidered silk, she is ing to recall as best she can the fami history. She says it isn't easy; the fan didn't talk much about its past. "I've r er seen the pictures of Nathan," she s "And surprisingly when you realize, n I've never seen Daniel having a picture his parents."

Since April, when Alec asked her fo divorce, Jocelyne has lived on the th floor of the family home, a pariah, off from the other family members w live there. The doors to the commu living room, library, dining room, a pool, which is in the basement, have b locked and she has not been given keys. "Everything is closed," she sa "Everybody goes I think to one direct [when I walk by]. They don't turn." Fa ily friends, such as financier Nathaniel Rothschild and his parents, Liliane a Élie, and Michel David-Weill, are keep her at arm's length.

As lavishly as they live and entertai the Wildensteins form an insular socie friends say. "They are like a tribe," s one. "They don't really mix." They live the same houses and share their va tions. Daniel, a friend says, "hates intru ers. He is antisocial." And he sets t tone for the family. "He controls tho boys the way Georges controlled hi says one woman who knows the fam well.

Georges, by all accounts, was a don neering figure. His life revolved arou the gallery and his racehorses, and he pected total commitment from his fami Both Alec and Guy went to the Ly Français in New York, but were pull out of the school by their grandfather several months each year when the spri racing season opened in France. The e tire family would set sail on "the *Que Elizabeth,* the *Queen Mary,* or the U.S *United States*," says Alec, and return t same way in October, when the seas ended.

Daniel wed Martine Kapferer, t daughter of a wealthy French Jewish fa ily, in 1939, in a marriage that frien say was arranged by Georges. The cou lived with him and his wife, Jean throughout Georges's life. But by the 5 Georges had begun to lose his grip Daniel. His son had expensive tastes, which Georges disapproved even as he i dulged them. Daniel became a regular

'2, the famous society brothel in Paris, id a frequent customer and friend of the gendary Madame Claude, who had her vn celebrated prostitution ring. "Daniel as very good at 122 . . . that house," celyne says with a laugh. "If you want- l to go to the Devil Room or, I don't iow . . ., every room had a different eme."

When Alec was a teenager, Daniel initi- ed him into the mysteries of paid-for sex. have known Madame Claude since I as fifteen and a half," says Alec. "She is a good friend of mine. My father and iad great respect for her. I knew all her ls." While Guy, who was still a little boy, yed home with his grandparents and other, Alec and Daniel hung out togeth- chasing women. According to Jocelyne, eople thought they were brothers."

"Georges hated Daniel's lifestyle—the men, the way he spent money," says e friend of the family's. Daniel fre- ented nightclubs with a girlfriend said be an Afghan princess, and he was a ture on the Côte d'Azur. "He was ite a playboy . . . good-looking and a g show-off," says Jocelyne. "He would n barefoot from the portal of the rleton at Cannes [and jump onto the is in the water] to water-ski." Eventu- y, Georges withdrew his support from niel as heir to the business in favor of uy, only 18 at the time. "Georges real- wanted it badly," says Jocelyne. "My sband say this . . . [Daniel] was all the ne seen in magazines. It was just o much."

But Georges died too soon to make it happen, and Daniel took his place as e head of the business. He moved out the family home, the Château de Mari- thal, and took an apartment in Paris th his new mistress (and current wife), lvia Roth, a model who had once been messenger in the early days of the Is- li army. "Poor Martine, she was sweet d out of her league," says a friend of niel's first wife. "She was stuck in the untry alone while Sylvia was covered diamonds and dancing on the tables in bs."

"Daniel," Jocelyne says, "used to tell ybody who asked that he hated his par- ts and he was never happier than the y they died." (His mother, Jeanne ldenstein, died in 1964.) In 1980, Joce- e remembers, she saw for the first time Château de Marienthal, where Daniel s born and raised. "Everything was astrophic," she says. "All the furniture d covers, and on the carpets you could all the pee of the pet Chow—the cur- tains were burned from the pee. Daniel, I mean, *hate* this house."

"For 10 years after Georges died, Daniel would go to his grave on All Saints' Day and get on his knees and beat the ground with his fists," says one friend of the family's. "He was so angry at Georges." But people say he soon became the same kind of father. He wanted his boys always close to him, going so far as to forbid Alec to go to college, insisting that he could learn all he needed to know about the family business by working in the gallery. For many years, he refused to let his boys marry. "He did not want us to get married," Alec says. "He considered marriage an unnatural state." Alec married Jocelyne in Las Vegas in 1978 without telling Daniel, who refused to go to their wedding reception in Switzerland.

There is no question, friends say, that Daniel adored his boys, but he was hard on both of them. "He would put Alec and Guy down in front of horse trainers, in front of everyone. He used to scream at Alec until Alec would get sick in the bathroom of the yacht [the 168-foot *Southern Breeze,* which the family has since sold]," one friend recalls. "I mean, what was the point of being on the best boat in the world, with the best food and the best servants, when this nightmare was going on?" Still, the family stuck close together.

Like his father, Daniel was such a powerful force in the art world that he could hold in abeyance all the whispers about the secrets of their fabulous collection. The Kann-manuscript controversy and other incidents, however, have focused attention once again on Georges Wildenstein and the period when he fled France in 1941 for New York City.

"I have made a point not to see Daniel," says Alain Vernay, a journalist and the grandson of the celebrated French Jewish art collector Adolph Schloss. "What is the use of telling him about his father? He knows." He is referring to the charge, made privately by others, that Georges Wildenstein collaborated with the Nazis, selling paintings to Hitler and allegedly even helping the Nazis locate, through Georges's representative in Paris, important collections that had been hidden from them.

"It was my father," Vernay recalls, "who received a call in Nice, and Georges came to see him at the Hôtel Royale at his suite. Georges told him he could be an 'honorary Aryan' [the status given to Jews regarded as helpful on key issues]—himself, his wife, my mother's three brothers—and have a sum in dollars in Switzerland in a special account if we gave the location of our collection. He said he was asked by the Germans to [ask my father for this arrangement]."

The Schloss collection was one of France's greatest, known for its Dutch and Flemish masters. The family had hidden it in a château in central France but were finally forced to reveal the whereabouts of the collection in April 1943, when the Nazis arrested them.

"My father kicked Wildenstein out and he never came back," says Vernay. As he remembers it, this meeting took place in early 1941.

According to documents in the U.S. National Archives, the previous November Georges had met in Aix-en-Provence with Hitler's chief art dealer, Karl Haberstock, and, over a period of "4 or 5 days" he made a deal. The Germans would return to him part of his collection, confiscated by them from a hiding place in a castle in Sourches, and allow one of his trusted non-Jewish employees, Roger Dequoy, to run the Paris gallery. In return, Georges agreed to sell to Hitler and his top officials anything they wanted out of his own stock and to help them find any other artworks they were interested in.

Soon thereafter, Georges left France for New York, with his wife, Jeanne, 23-year-old Daniel and his wife, Martine, and Alec, who had been born in Marseilles several months earlier. While Georges spent the war years in the United States, many of his artworks, as per the agreement, were returned to his Paris gallery. Dequoy, whom one of the American O.S.S. interrogators, Theodore Rousseau, would later identify as "perhaps the worst of the collaborationists among the dealers," worked hand in hand with Hitler's art dealer Haberstock. According to accounts based on archival material—in Feliciano's *The Lost Museum* and Lynn Nicholas's award-winning 1995 *The Rape of Europa*—Dequoy, on behalf of the Wildensteins, sold paintings to Göring and other high Nazi officials and, in one deal that fell through, was ready to take possession of a group of stolen Impressionist paintings that the Nazis, who regarded them as "degenerate art," were dumping.

After the war, efforts by the French government to bring charges against the Wildenstein firm were rejected by the courts on the ground that there was "no proof of voluntary sales to the enemy," according to *The Rape of Europa*. Safely

Wildenstein

in the United States, Georges "became a champion for restitution," says Marc Masurovsky, head of the Holocaust Art Restitution Project. Georges wrote an article for a French Resistance magazine in 1943 denouncing collaborationist art dealers—a tour de force of denial, many in the art world thought. "I think Georges almost believed he did not collaborate," says Masurovsky. "He made himself a victim."

Alec adamantly denies that his grandfather collaborated with the Nazis. Says Alec, "As far as my father remembers, there never was . . . He never even remembers a meeting [with Haberstock]." Alec says that the O.S.S. team of interrogators was prejudiced against Georges by dealers "that hated my grandfather." He believes that Haberstock may have made the story up. Jonathan Petropoulos, a historian at Loyola College in Baltimore, who has studied Haberstock's life, believes he was telling the truth. "If anything, he was lying by omission about Dequoy, underplaying it," says Petropoulos.

The only way to know the true extent of the alleged collaboration would be to examine the contents of the Wildenstein vaults and files. For years people have speculated that the vaults contain art looted by the Nazis and taken in trade by Dequoy. The suspicions are strong, but there is no smoking gun. "You can't get their records without a subpoena, and who knows if Georges didn't sanitize the files?" says one historian. In fact, the Wildensteins have been caught with works from the Nazi plunder only once, in the 1950s, when they were found to have a set of 15th-century enamels that had belonged to Poland's Czartoryski family before the war. The Wildensteins settled with the Czartoryskis.

But the current controversy over the Kann manuscripts has put the art world on alert. Masurovsky, for one, is interested in the collection of the late Florence Gould, the daughter-in-law of the great robber baron Jay Gould. The collection was created largely by Daniel in the 60s and 70s and sold at auction by Sotheby's in 1985. According to Masurovsky, the provenance of some of the paintings in the collection is murky, and it is still not clear how they ended up in Wildenstein hands. "Wildenstein," says Masurovsky, "was one of the few dealers in New York at the time that could pull it off, the westward drift of stolen art."

According to Willi Korte, a German lawyer who has devoted his life to tracking down artworks looted by the Nazis, "Pick any Impressionist major artist and read the provenance objectively. You'll find many instances of a great deal of detail until the late 30s or early 40s, and then no names, no dates, even just blanks, and then Wildenstein pops up in the 50s."

But Alec is firm that any such charges are "absolutely ludicrous." "My grandfather was a Jew," he says. "There is no reason he would have met anybody in the German army."

There is no evidence that Daniel Wildenstein participated in his father's alleged wartime activities. But over the years, Daniel did hear the whispered allegations. He knew, says one friend, that for many years there were prominent French Jewish families, like the Schloss heirs, who would not deal with the Wildensteins because of Georges. But Daniel greeted their contempt with his own. "He would say, 'People hate us because they are jealous,'" recalls one woman. "But I think the criticism made him bitter and isolated." Although his grandchildren have been raised as Jews and although his second wife, Sylvia, is Israeli, Daniel has been criticized for his reluctance to donate to Jewish charities. He has also baffled friends by his refusal to set foot in Israel. Indeed, Jocelyne says she was told by Daniel she could not hold her son's Bar Mitzvah in Israel, because Daniel would not attend.

Within the family, friends and former employees say, the rumors about Georges's wartime past were never discussed. "Even if Daniel knew what happened," says a friend of Alec and Guy's, "he would not tell his children." As the rumors began to appear in the press—most notably in a 1991 *Spy* article, by Jonathan Napack—the family virtually ignored them. As it does today. "There is no reaction," says Jocelyne Wildenstein, "because they are so sure of the power they have. They think they are above it."

These days, Daniel Wildenstein spends most of his time at the family's Paris headquarters, updating his art archives and overseeing the research on more Wildenstein catalogues raisonnés. Evenings are spent quietly with Sylvia. They had lived together for 14 years before Daniel finally married her, shortly after Alec married Jocelyne in 1978 and just before Guy married Kristina Hannson, a Swedish former model. Like Jocelyn Sylvia grew up without much money, t daughter of Eastern European Jews w had immigrated to Israel. She is wid liked. "She's delightful," says one pro nent socialite. "Her mother used to we white plastic boots, and Sylvia wou laugh and say, 'See what money can bu She's very funny and very kind, and though she lives this rarefied life, s knows [that wealth isn't everything]. T rest of them believe it. *She* keeps a p ture of herself holding a machine gun her side table. She knows."

Among the Wildensteins, Sylvia is t one who is most willing to acknowled that the family is facing serious troub Over lunch at Stresa, a Paris restaura where she goes every day to me friends, she has talked freely about h upset she is about Alec and Jocelyn divorce; how concerned she is for Da iel, who is diabetic; and how the stre of the scandal is affecting him. As pe ple such as Masurovsky and Korte beg to focus on the Wildenstein holdings a as the possibility grows of a divorce tri that could force the family to divulge nancial and business documents, Dani friends say, seems determined to fig back. If any of his friends or fami members disagree with Daniel's beha ior these days, they aren't going to t him. Sylvia, his sons—everyone, says Joc lyne, fears crossing him. "He has all t power."

And that, more than any of the cris facing the Wildensteins now, may b the biggest threat to the future of t family dynasty. Today, Alec and Guy a often dismissed as lightweights by a dealers and even some collectors. " couple of playboys," one dealer cal them, "who happened to inherit the mo considerable gallery in the world." "Ri boys," says another dealer dismissive echoing the general impression of Gu who has become best known for his po playing, and Alec, best known for h game hunting.

Nowadays, Guy handles much of t administration of the gallery, and Al functions as its lead salesman. Friend and former employees say that they d have talent, although evidence of it h been buried under Daniel's domineerin presence. It was Alec, for instance, wh wooed David-Weill, one of the world greatest art collectors, selling him t long-lost *Psyche,* among other painting And although few people are aware of both Alec and Guy have orchestrated m jor deals, and Alec has authored a cat logue raisonné, on the painter Odilon R

ion. "The boys know their art, they know their clients and their tastes," insists one collector. The problem, friends say, is that they have almost no influence over major decisions.

"Daniel is the one who sets the prices, he is the one who declares, This is a Cézanne from this period, and this is what it's worth," says a former employee. "When you see the three of them together," says one man who knows the family, "Daniel does all the talking and the boys add only elements. I went to see Daniel recently, and Guy was sitting in the office and he didn't say a word."

There are those who believe that the worst thing Daniel has done for the Wildenstein empire has been to infantilize his sons. "He raised cripples," says one friend of the family's. "Alec is very funny and very smart. If his father had let him go to university, he'd be really running this company. If their father had let them grow normally, they'd be amazing. There wouldn't be this mess if it weren't for Daddy."

Jocelyne says that Daniel's control has weighed heavily on Alec. "I think at a certain point he was getting depressed," she says. "Alec is the one who really deals with the racehorses, but everything goes to his father, nothing comes to him. He is the one who [bought] one day Allez France as a foal in America, the best horse ever seen in France."

Some in the art world believe that the Wildensteins have lost their aggressiveness as Daniel has aged but has refused to let go. "Their power today in certain ways is more latent than active," says one dealer. "If they wanted, they could use it to dominate the business. But this generation is not as aggressive as the preceding ones." To a certain extent, factors beyond the Wildensteins' control have affected the way they do business: the growing dominance of the auction houses over the market, and the increasing amount of art held by the world's museums, which diminishes the supply available to dealers. But the Wildensteins, people say, have also been strangely passive in recent years and stuck in the ways of the past. "A lot of people think that the behavior of the Wildensteins is due to sneakiness, but I think it has a lot to do with incompetence," says one man who has done business with the gallery. "It is a very old-fashioned firm, in its arrogance and in its approach to business."

It has long been Daniel's dream, friends say, to be remembered not so much as an art dealer but as a great art historian, as the man who financed valuable research into art and whose own work made him an authority on artists such as Monet and Manet. "I'm not involved in the galleries. I'm only interested in books and art history," he said when his final volume on Monet was published in 1992.

That his dream could be about to go up in smoke, that the empire his family worked so hard to build might be about to crumble, does not seem to have occurred to Daniel. "The publicity, the scandal," says his friend André Ben Lassin, a businessman and financier. "He doesn't care." □

Gardner Heist

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 219 notice" the museum's minimal security, he said. Once, he told me, the Donatis unlatched the simple lock on an unalarmed window on the museum's first floor. They returned often to find that the lock remained unsecured and apparently unnoticed.

Connor also told me that Bobby Donati coveted a certain shiny Napoleonic flagstaff up on display in the museum. Connor says he tried to steer his friend's interest toward a bronze Shang-dynasty beaker. (Neither of these stolen items is among the 11 offered up for ransom by Youngworth.)

In September 1991, at age 50, Bobby Donati was found hog-tied and stabbed to death in the trunk of an abandoned Cadillac in Revere, Massachusetts, a few miles from Boston. Whether his murder was Gardner-related has not been determined; Connor will say only that he believes the Shang beaker stolen from the Gardner was intended as a gift to him from his lifelong friend.

David Houghton turned out to be an even better lead. In the late 1950s, in the Boston suburbs of Malden and Melrose, he was one of the "Elvis Bandits," a gang of cat burglars with DA haircuts who were arrested in connection with a hundred or so break-ins. By the mid-60s, Houghton was a loyal Connor follower, working as an antiques dealer, mechanic, occasional fence, and roadie for Connor's rock band, Myles and the Wild Ones.

When Connor was last jailed, in 1989, for transporting stolen property across state lines, Houghton took custody of many of his friend's belongings. These effects, scattered across Massachusetts, included many steamer trunks filled with valuable antiques and artifacts, in particular Oriental swords and sheaths collected by Connor over 30 years.

"Myles's stuff," as the eclectic hodgepodge became known, filled a 40-foot-long box trailer, and was a chore to manage. In March 1992, Houghton, who at 52 was planning to marry and had moved to rural Auburn, Massachusetts, arranged to have Myles's stuff transferred to a new custodian, approved by Connor. Not long after that, Houghton, who weighed 350 pounds, died from coronary-artery disease.

Houghton, Connor would later say, was the man who organized the Gardner break-in and hid the loot, with Bobby Donati as his inside man. The new custodian he entrusted with Myles's stuff was William Youngworth.

Billy Youngworth claims that he met Myles Connor 23 years ago, while studying karate in the suburbs south of Boston. Connor says they met in Walpole state prison (now known as M.C.I.–Cedar Junction) in 1978. By then, Connor was 2 years into the 4-year sentence he'd received for his involvement in the Wyeth case and other crimes—shortened from a likely 10 years, thanks to his role in brokering the return of the M.F.A.'s Rembrandt stolen in 1975.

Youngworth was doing time for armed robbery. In 1977 his Chrysler New Yorker had been traced to a Watertown, Massachusetts, bank job, and two witnesses testified that he was the getaway driver. He received 13 years, serving 8 of them in Walpole.

Youngworth says that in Walpole's 10-block he gravitated toward Connor as a father figure. His own father, William junior, had been seriously ill with a vascular disorder through most of the 1960s, and was often unable to find steady work in the sheet-metal trade. His mother, née Audrey Sullivan, had died on Christmas Eve 1967 after bingeing on Seconal and sherry. She was 31, and her son was barely 8. Youngworth says he and his sister, Mary, became "two angry little kids, impossible to deal with as we grew into teenagers." Even now, he says, he remains estranged from his sister, who is in jail in Florida, and his ailing father.

Paroled in 1986, Youngworth embarked on a life of small-time theft and con artistry. He was especially adept, he says,

at fobbing off cheap Oriental rugs and suspect Shaker furniture as high-quality items. Whenever possible, he hooked up with Connor and the Donatis.

That was a heady time for Connor. From 1986 until his arrest in 1989, he was in his criminal prime, often enjoying huge cash scores by robbing drug dealers, then using the money to purchase samurai swords, as well as jade and ivory, at highbrow auctions. Connor says that his personal art collection is worth $5 million.

Youngworth claims he worked with Connor and the others in countless robberies. Many of the crimes, he says, benefited the Irish Republican Army by guaranteeing cash and weapons for "the cause," which is never far from the hearts of Boston's Irish-American underworld. He says he specialized in providing Connor's colleagues with false driver's licenses and passports.

Some associates say Youngworth indeed had a knack for fabricating IDs and a discerning eye for Oriental rugs. But others, Connor among them, say he was at best a secondary figure who tended to insert himself into criminal exploits he had heard about from others.

My sense is that Youngworth did consort for many years with felons. According to two credible sources, one of them a lawyer, he was present at a brutal Mob hit inside a van, but the Mafia killers allowed him to live. Driven by braggadocio, however, Youngworth also invents stories. He has even said he was with Connor at the M.F.A. heist—"a sad lie," according to Connor.

Youngworth was re-arrested in 1986, in a drug-conspiracy case, and again in 1988, for illegally carrying a firearm and violating parole. The second arrest cost him two years in a federal prison.

Freed on August 10, 1990—nearly five months after the Gardner robbery—Youngworth says he was determined to go straight. He looked up an old girlfriend in the antiques trade, Judith Sacarob Cohen. She was 38, he was 31. The daughter of Florence Sacarob, a real-estate agent in Boston's tony western suburbs, Judith was married to Louis Cohen and ran an antiques store in Allston, a neighborhood in west Boston. Louis Cohen was behind bars at the time, and Judy, smitten anew by Youngworth, asked him to help with the store.

By July 1991 the pair had a son, William IV, and were running a shop called Almost Antiques, which specialized in Victorian furniture. "For a while it was a really beautiful place," says a former employee. "Judy was a tough businesswoman, and Billy was really hustling to bid on estate sales." The couple married in 1994.

Connor, meanwhile, was back in jail, having fallen prey to an F.B.I. setup in Bloomington, Illinois. A special agent named Tom Daly had spent three months courting him, using the undercover identity of "Joe," a New York–born fence with contacts in the Far East. In March 1989, Connor finally tried to move some hot items through Joe, among them a Simon Willard clock missing from the Woolworth estate in Maine and two fine Dutch works stolen in 1975 from the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College, *The Interior of the New Church, Delft,* by H. C. Van Vliet, and *St. John the Baptist,* by Pieter Lastman.

Connor was busted, and by early 1990 he was in a cell with Rocco Ellis at the federal prison in Lompoc, California. There he began reaching out to former associates to find a reputable caretaker for his treasured collection of swords and other goods. First it was Houghton. By mid-1992, at Connor's request, the big box trailer crammed with steamer trunks had been secured by Youngworth in a private lot behind Almost Antiques.

Connor, who once saw Youngworth as a "trustworthy friend in a time of need," now believes that Youngworth sold many of his *objets d'art* for pennies on the dollar whenever he was strapped for cash. "He has proven to be a degenerate thief, but I don't believe for a minute that your readers will shed a tear to hear that Myles Connor was robbed." (Youngworth denies robbing his friend. "Myles is mistaken. Most of his property is safe.")

Later, speaking of Youngworth's treachery, Connor told me, "He has stolen 99.9 percent of my belongings. At one point I wanted to live in a baronial Tudor mansion with all my things around me." He paused. "Perhaps it's a blessing. All I need now is a Japanese teahouse."

From 1993 to 1997, according to Judith Youngworth, she and Billy were in a narcotics tailspin. Desperate for money and ill-equipped to keep their business running, she said, the couple started selling off bits and pieces of Connor's property, in the end displaying many of his items as antiques for sale in their store.

Soon they started missing rental payments on Almost Antiques. By 1995 they had sold their $413,000 Newton home at a loss, acquiring in its stead the Barn, a ramshackle building that was part used-furniture store, part residence, on a tw acre site in nearby Randolph. Youn worth's behavior "was very erratic," sa Robert Webber, their landlord in Allsto who evicted the couple in 1994.

At one point that year, Youngwor lodged a $100,000 claim with his insure Fitchburg Mutual Insurance Co., asse ing that he had been robbed of Orient rugs at gunpoint in the basement of A most Antiques. The insurers refused pay, citing "compelling evidence" that r crime ever occurred.

One former employee at the Barn sa Billy and Judy probably spent $500,000 c drugs in two years, 1995 and 1996, mea while ignoring piles of bills. Under alias and in his own name, Youngworth no owes thousands of dollars to utility co panies. The I.R.S. has a $19,535 tax lie on the Barn. In November 1997, from ja he declared bankruptcy.

Debts and civil suits weren't Youn worth's only problems. In February 199 acting on a tip from a jailed informan police had found a stolen white Aerost van in one of three garage bays at th Barn. Youngworth said he was set up, b the case was scheduled for a Septembe trial. If convicted, Youngworth would b liable to prosecution as a "habitual o fender," which could get him 15 years.

On July 9 the Barn was raided agai After 10 hours of searching, the polic and the F.B.I. confiscated only three 10 year-old firearms and a marijuana roac Still, Youngworth was tossed in jail, to b indicted on ominous-sounding "weapon and drug" charges.

With his wife and son in a pani Youngworth needed a "get out of ja quick" card. And he had one: the se from the Massachusetts Bay Colon charter.

Youngworth insists that his name w never supposed to surface in conne tion with the return of the seal. He sa that he offered it to a Randolph detecti named William Pace in exchange for h release from the police lockup, and th Pace agreed. But within 24 hours Mass chusetts secretary of state William Galv was holding a press conference about th recovery of the prized artifact, and wor leaked out that it had been in the han of a petty criminal named Youngworth.

Given Rocco Ellis's avowals about th seal, it was apparent to me that Youn worth must be connected to Connor. went to see Ellis in prison, and he was d spondent. He said that Houghton had e trusted Youngworth with Connor's pro erty, and that the seal had likely been hi

en in the false bottom of a trunk or a torage case. Somehow, Youngworth must ave stumbled upon it. Worse, though, he ad used up a great bargaining chip to eat a minor bail problem.

What about the Gardner art? I asked. Ellis seemed to brighten slightly. "If it irns up, I guess I'm entitled to some re-ard," he said.

Almost immediately I began to try to lush Youngworth out, reporting repeat-dly that he was now the focal point of ie Gardner investigation. At first Young-orth ignored my articles, but eventually got a call at the *Herald.* The city-desk erk said, "It's a guy who says you've een writing about him."

Youngworth was livid, charging that I ad been maligning him. I offered to buy im lunch and discuss the matter, and we iet an hour later. He seemed paranoid nd strung out. Over coffee, he petulantly ccused me of being "the F.B.I.'s mole" the *Herald.* "They've got one at every ewspaper!" he railed.

After a while, he began to open up. It ppeared that the raid on his house had een staged to get at Connor's property, ome of which Youngworth then took to warehouse for safekeeping. He obvious-didn't know about Houghton's role in ie Gardner robbery; in fact, he kept in-sting that the theft had been commis-oned by the yakuza, Japan's Mafia.

Later he gave me a tour of the Barn, nd I saw that dozens of Connor's trunks y about on the floor, open and empty, hile others were still piled up neatly, rapped shut. The thought briefly entered y mind that the Gardner paintings might in one of those musty containers.

Within days I'd cut a deal with Young-orth: if he got me an interview with lyles Connor, I'd turn the heat down in e paper. Better still, if Youngworth could rsuade Connor to broker the art's re-rn, the *Herald* and I would try to con-nce the Gardner and the F.B.I. that ey should treat the deal seriously.

On August 8, at Youngworth's request, onnor agreed to see me at the McKean ederal Prison in Lewis Run, Pennsylva-a, where he was finishing up the final 2 ars of his 10-year sentence.

f Youngworth emanates despair, his great hero, Myles Connor, projects the mforting air of a gray-bearded professor. ne of the most colorful and fascinating of odern criminals, he is considered by any of his peers to be a sort of Robin ood. A vegetarian, he is feared in prison a convict who can overpower much ger men. When he is moved through the penal system, he is coded as a "high flight risk." Since we met, he has bent my ear for hours on art, the law, samurai-sword-making, Hummel figurines, and the best ways to hijack armored cars (he favors brandishing a rocket-propelled-grenade launcher from the back of a flatbed; it rarely fails, he says, to persuade poorly paid drivers to turn over their keys). As America's preeminent art thief, he also has many opinions on the subject of stealing artworks.

"Art collectors—and that includes museums—are at best temporary custodians of the items they acquire," Connor told me. "More than three-quarters of what you see in museums today was looted or stolen."

To Connor, crime is a cross between chess and guerrilla war. His first run-in with police came in 1965, when he was caught stealing Tiffany lamps from a property on the Maine coast near where his family vacationed. Henry "Hank" Hosking, the then 60-year-old local sheriff's deputy who moved in to arrest him, knew Myles by name and tried to talk him into giving himself up quietly.

Instead, the 22-year-old pitched the lawman down a hillside, fired a bullet over his head, and drove off. Arrested a few hours later, he soon bullied his way out of the lockup in Sullivan, Maine, by waving around a tiny revolver he had carved from a bar of soap.

"I had more pressing business," Connor once explained. "They were in my way and laid hands on me. I'm not professing to be a nice guy, but usually I am. Besides, it is well within the convict's code to deal with an unruly deputy in a firm, nonlethal fashion."

From that moment on, Connor was essentially on a lifelong lam. He was recaptured but released by Maine authorities in early 1966. Soon the Massachusetts State Police were hunting him in connection with a plot to snatch a Rembrandt from the Fogg Museum at Harvard. A search of his apartment in Revere turned up seven antique swords stolen from the Peabody Museum in Salem, as well as Chinese art objects taken from the Forbes Museum in Milton. (The police also came upon Connor's pets, a large cobra and an alligator.)

On April 27, 1966, Connor was apprehended by a Boston police corporal, whom he shot in the testicles. Connor himself was shot four times, and after a gun battle in the Back Bay he was trailed by his blood drops to a Marlborough Street rooftop.

"I was captured, shot to hell," he explained, "handcuffed and leg-cuffed, so near death I had no discernible pulse. I had a shattered spleen, a transected kidney, some perforated intestines . . . I later lost several feet [of intestines] in surgery . . . and hits to the spine, elbow, leg, hand, liver, and stomach. Still, I was subjected to a line of interrogation that included being hoisted by my private parts, then having said parts pummeled to the hue of eggplant-purple-black, and then being worked over by a gang of cowardly goons until they mistakenly pronounced me dead. These were cops. I held my breath, stopped moving, concealed from them my contemptuous glare by shutting my eyes, and essentially tricked them thus—and beyond a doubt saved my life . . . for they were also scheming to throw me off the rooftop, and would have done so had I not screamed at the top of my lungs, for all of the Back Bay to hear, that '*these motherfuckers are trying to kill me!*'"

It took Connor a year and a half and two operations to recover, but he seemingly has no ill effects from his old wounds. He runs 50 miles a week, he says, and does 100 push-ups every day. He dreams of hiking in the Himalayas once his sentence is served.

Connor speaks proudly about having become a member of Mensa in 1996, about almost getting admitted to the Harvard School of Medicine in 1972, and about jamming in his youth as a rock 'n' roll guitarist with Sha Na Na and his own band, Myles and the Wild Ones. He is more reluctant to talk about his 32-year-old son from a brief, youthful marriage, Myles junior, who has spent time living on the street. Another subject he confided for the first time to me was his six-year charade, in the 1970s, as a salaried curator at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts.

During that time, wearing a fake beard and mustache and employing a Teutonic accent and a false identity ("Dr. Hoover," in honor of the F.B.I.), he roved the catacombs of the museum, finding among its hidden treasures the early makings of his own art collection.

By the time of my second visit to Connor, he had been moved to the Donald W. Wyatt Detention Center in Central Falls, Rhode Island, by federal officials hoping to learn more about the Gardner offer made by Youngworth. I asked him flat out if he had ordered Houghton and Donati to knock over the museum. He glowered, and I witnessed the frightening, feral side of him I had heard described. But then his face relaxed, and the malevolence turned to mischief:

"To most museums, I guess, my name is like Darth Vader. I'm quite capable of breaking into any museum, including the

Gardner Heist

Gardner, and I've been in places—like the Smithsonian storage houses—where they would not be happy to know I've been. But I did not plan, nor did I consign, the Gardner break-in."

He does not deny, though, that he orchestrated the 1975 heist at the nearby Museum of Fine Arts. He even jotted down some of the details:

> The surveillance into [the museum's] operation and all aspects of M.F.A. security was intense, including fly-overs and around-the-clock observation. A burglary via underground passageways was not ruled out. (By the way, the Gardner Museum absolutely could have been successfully burgled underground at this point.)
>
> But as the time closed in, the most direct method of a lightning-strike sortie utilizing disguises that were impenetrable was finally decided on. . . . There were two back-up plans and fail-safe contingencies. . . . It was done with extreme precision.

That precision included laying down machine-gun fire at the feet of the dozen museum guards who ran after the retreating thieves. The Rembrandt portrait was smallish, in an oval frame, and easy enough to hoist from its simple peg. Connor seems to have overseen the delicate task himself. One M.F.A. guard, a retired Boston cop, attempted to wrestle the prize from its robbers, but he was smacked across the head with the muzzle of a pistol. "I respected him—a typical Polish cop," Connor said. "But our goal was no injuries, especially to civilians. We met the goal."

Connor secreted the painting under a friend's bed. ("Everyone loves the thought of owning a Rembrandt, if only for a little while. My friend was thrilled at the concept, and there it remained.") After three months, police investigators still had no clues. Then Connor sought out a contact in the Massachusetts State Police, Major John Regan, to help broker the work's return. A short time later, on a dark street, a man in a ski mask—not Connor, but one of his most loyal intimates—passed the painting to Regan. Connor notes with pleasure that all 17 people involved in the M.F.A. heist remain unknown to this day.

Isabella Stewart Gardner, who was given to staging boxing matches and befriending bohemians and rogues when she wasn't scouring Europe for art, might have liked Myles Connor.

His father, Myles senior, was a straight-arrow Milton policeman, whom Connor describes as "perhaps the only truly honorable person that I have ever known in law enforcement." His uncle was "Wild Bill" Connor, a John F. Kennedy confidant and the legendary operative of the Office of Strategic Services—precursor of the C.I.A.—who ran the New England office of the Veterans Administration in the 1960s.

Connor's mother, née Lucy Conant Johnson, had the Yankee pedigree. Her great-great-grandfather was William Gregory Cole, a Civil War clipper-ship owner and New England arts patron whose cousin Thomas Cole founded the Hudson River school of painting. Further back still were William "the Elder" Brewster, a spiritual leader of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims, and Thomas Paine, author of *Common Sense*. ("He's probably the source of my rebellious and anarchistic streak," Connor says.) More recently, Lucy Connor can be linked to the suffragist Julia Ward Howe, a cousin of her grandmother's, and Charles Johnson, a collector friendly with the historian William Sturgis Bigelow. Bigelow and Howe, it turns out, were friends with Isabella Stewart Gardner.

"I'm sure some of my ancestors knew Mrs. Gardner very well, and visited her home," Connor told me.

Lucy Connor was horrified to see her son turn into a criminal. After one of his escapades in Maine in 1965, she rode around in a police cruiser pleading with him over a bullhorn to give himself up. "He needs psychiatric help," she said.

"That was damn embarrassing, God rest her soul," Connor says. "I make no bones about it: I'm an outlaw, and I'll always be an outlaw. . . . Not for a moment do I intend on painting myself as some misunderstood soul undeserving of condemnation and disapproval for my various criminal exploits. However, neither am I the unflattering character so deftly portrayed by some."

Speaking about the Gardner theft, Connor finds it "inexcusably sloppy" that the crew that hit the museum sliced two Rembrandts from their frames and smashed the glass in front of the Vermeer, which, he says, could easily have been unbolted, sparing *The Concert* a shower of potentially ruinous glass shrapnel. "Thank God they didn't try for the Titian," he says of the museum's most prized work, which is wall-size. "The poor thing would have been cracked in half."

A week after my early-morning trip to see the Rembrandt in August, my account appeared in the *Herald*, and soon the Youngworth-Connor offer became an international sensation. I was asked to meet with the Gardner's chief conservator, Barbara Mangum, and describe to her in detail the painting I'd been shown.

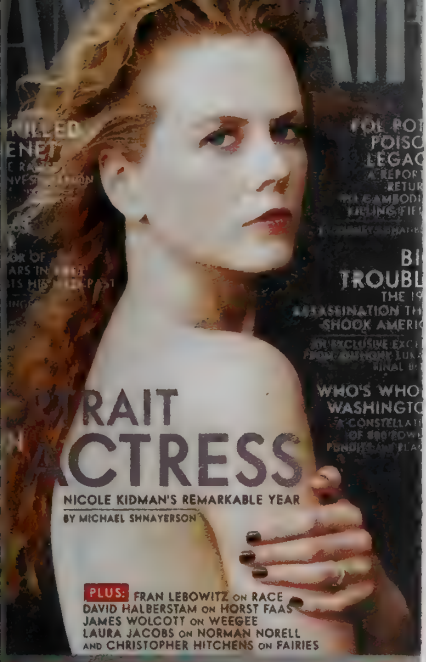
Soon the Gardner issued a press release stating that the canvas was "a good copy or perhaps the original." It also hired a lawyer, Rudolph F. Pierce, to begin negotiating with three parties which had divergent interests: the museum, which wanted its art back but did not want to be seen as kowtowing to criminals; Youngworth, who had hired Connor's lawyer, Martin Leppo, to work out an immunity deal; and federal officials in Boston, who were demanding concrete proof—such as a lesser item from the theft—before going forward.

As the reporter who had seen the Rembrandt, I had access to all sides, and it soon became evident that they would not be able to make a deal. On the Gardner's board of trustees were two opposing camps, one that wanted to get to the bottom of Youngworth's offer, and another that put its faith in law enforcement's ability to crack the case. Meanwhile, the U.S. attorney for Boston, Donald K. Stern, refused Youngworth immunity without proof that he could deliver the art, and Leppo counseled his client to do nothing that might lead to an arrest.

Wondering whether paint chips or photos of the works might be proof enough, I asked Youngworth if he could provide them. In mid-October, just before he was convicted and jailed in the stolen-van case, a manila envelope containing a roll of 25 negatives and a small vial of paint chips came into the *Herald*'s possession, and we set about checking them out.

Because of the poor quality of the resultant photographs, the negatives were inconclusive. The chips were examined by Walter C. McCrone, a Chicago scientist often called on by the F.B.I. to test evidence under electron and polarized-light microscopes. McCrone had debunked the famous Shroud of Turin by testing fibers and determining that they were spotted with 14th-century paint, not with Christ's blood. He had also exposed fake Rembrandts by demonstrating that microscopic bits of chalk in the canvas primer were produced much later than the 17th century.

McCrone declared the chips we gave him to be 350 years old, and to have originated in the region where Rembrandt and Vermeer painted. His findings produced headlines everywhere, and the chips were handed over to the F.B.I. and the Gardner. Six weeks later, news releases announced that the chips were "not what they purported to be." I soon learned that the Gardner had compared the chips with those left behind from the sliced Rembrandts, but not with anything by Vermeer. When I urged them to do so, it appeared that the chip


TRAIT
ACTRESS
NICOLE KIDMAN'S REMARKABLE YEAR
BY MICHAEL SHNAYERSON
PLUS: FRAN LEBOWITZ ON RACE
DAVID HALBERSTAM ON HORST FAAS
JAMES WOLCOTT ON WEEGEE
LAURA JACOBS ON NORMAN NORELL
AND CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS ON FAIRIES


FAIR
ONARDO'S
ASTERPIECE
STAR LEONARDO DICAPRIO
SIMPLY THE WORLD'S
HEARTTHROB


ADERS
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INCLUDING: BILL CLINTO
AL GORE, TONY BLA
BILL GATES, GIANNI AGNELL
POPE JOHN PAUL II,
MADELEINE ALBRIGHT
AND MORE!
PLUS: AMERICA
THE LAST EMPIRE
BY GORE VIDAL


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AN ISSUE

Gardner Heist

were quite consistent with *The Concert.*

But by then the press had declared Youngworth a hoaxer and the *Herald* and me dupes. Once again the Gardner story faded from the news.

After Youngworth was jailed in the van case, I grew closer to his wife, Judy. From her I learned the depth of the couple's drug dependency and its effect on their lives. I also learned that they had methodically sifted through Connor's trunks. By late November, Billy had been able to dry out in prison, but Judy was still addicted to prescription drugs.

On November 23, I drove her and little Billy to the state prison in Concord for their first contact visit in six weeks. She spoke with hope about their future, whispering that they might migrate to Israel once the Gardner matter was resolved.

The next morning she was found dead, apparently from an overdose of prescription drugs. Her son tried to revive her with cold compresses before finally running for help. Judith Youngworth was 45.

By early January of this year, only three people were still willing to give Youngworth a chance to produce the stolen art: a Gardner trustee and philanthropist, who has asked to remain anonymous; Harvey Silverglate, the Boston lawyer famed for defending Louise Woodward in the nanny murder case, whom I had called to represent me in the event of a subpoena's arising over my trip to the warehouse; and myself.

The trustee had grown intensely frustrated with the attitude of law enforcement toward Youngworth. The Feds, he said, were afraid of being seen as weak if they granted immunity for the art's return. "They do not respect the importance of these paintings," he said. "And they're far too risk-averse. They'd never make it in the private sector."

In December, at my urging, Silverglate and the trustee went to speak with Youngworth in prison. Both came away convinced that he was not perpetrating a hoax, and soon the two men were proposing a contract that would turn the Youngworth offer into a legitimate business deal.

Youngworth would "provide information" leading to the return of the stolen art. Doing so was in no way illegal, Silverglate reasoned, since the terms of the Gardner's $5 million reward were predicated on that very concept: information for money. In exchange, the wealthy trustee would agree to pay Youngworth $1.5 million tax-free, half of it in a 20-year trust for Youngworth's small son, who had become a ward of the state.

My role was to help keep the parties in contact, and to assure Youngworth that there was no setup. In the end, I might even be the person told the whereabouts of the art. Since I am a reporter, my source of information would be subject to certain privileges under the First Amendment.

As of mid-January, a deal seemed close to being consummated.

Throughout the long negotiations, my editors and I debated the propriety of a reporter's becoming a player in what is essentially a crime story. We told the Gardner and federal officials that we had no interest in the reward money. We agreed, in the end, that the importance of the art made our actions appropriate. Newspapers, after all, are recycled every day, and reporters come and go. But there are only some 35 Vermeers in existence, and only one Rembrandt seascape.

Curiously, as the months passed, Youngworth more and more avoided mention of the one man he had originally singled out: Myles Connor. Meanwhile, Connor, in jail in Rhode Island, was learning in greater and greater detail how the custodian of his possessions had allegedly robbed him blind.

Neither Youngworth nor Connor has ever fully explained how the Gardner art came under Youngworth's control. And Connor now seems far more interested in getting back his missing swords than in benefiting from the return of the Gardner art. He is furious with Youngworth and has begun proceedings to sue him. "I'll do my time," he told me, "and when I get out I'll look up Bill and make arrangements for him to repay me for what he owes me."

Youngworth has told me many uncorroborated versions of the Gardner crime. At one point he said he had planned it from prison; another time he laid it all to a crew of armored-car robbers. The version he has not told is the one I suspect is true: that he came across the loot by accident, in one of the trunks or storage cases belonging to Myles Connor which had been entrusted to him by David Houghton. And that he did so in the course of methodically embezzling Connor's collection of samurai swords and other precious *objets.* The novice, in other words, accidentally outwitted the master.

Or did he? When I spoke to Connor in early January, he told me he was working diligently to recapture a controlling interest in the stolen paintings. "One way or the other, that art will be returned," Connor said. "And you can bet that Myles Connor will have a hand in it."

I mentioned my theory about Youngworth to Connor, and he just shrugged. "Do you believe in Karma?" he asked. "I do. I believe that what goes around in one's lifetime probably comes around. The way I see it, getting hooked up with Billy Youngworth was probably a great big Karmatic kick in the ass to Myles Connor." □

Head

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 237 to fill the house to its rafters with festive south-of-the-border artifacts. Yet in her own bedroom she incongruously retained the French Provincial furnishings and red-and-white toile de Jouy fabric that had adorned her previous residence on Doheny Drive.

Hoping to impress upon Paramount that it needed no designer but her, Edith spent more time at the studio than was strictly necessary. In an attempt to lighten Edith's load, Frank Richardson, the administrative head of the wardrobe department, offered a job to Earl Luick, who had been designing for movies since 1927. "I told him, 'Not with Edith Head, never,'" Luick says today. "If I had gone there she would have gotten the first choice of pictures. She was a witch, and you can use a *b* there." Oleg Cassini, who did accept a design position at Paramount, says, "I was obstructed many times by her. She made life difficult. She told management, 'Cassini should be my assistant'—but I was hired to be a designer! Then she fought not to give me my first credit, for *I Wanted Wings* [1941]. She said it was in her contract that she was the only designer who could get credit on a picture at Paramount. She had the energy of a tigress defending her position."

Loretta Young (whom she dressed in five pictures) sees Edith as "more of a coordinator than a designer. Edith was much more accommodating than other designers—which is probably why I liked her. I butted into everything because she let me. [MGM costume designer] Adrian would just walk out of the room if I interfered!"

Surrounded by temperament, Edith displayed none herself; she found it more ad-

Head

vantageous to comport herself like a corporate executive than to carry on like a *créateur.* "When we were working on *And Now Tomorrow,* I called her from New York and told her I had found the most wonderful vicuña trench coat at Bergdorf's," Young says. "She said, 'Buy it. We'll use it.' I was so surprised! I never knew a designer to say that. They always wanted to invent everything."

In 1948, the year the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences instituted an Oscar for best costume, Edith, age 50, prepared herself to receive her laurels for "longevity, if nothing else," the designer said. Her contributions to Billy Wilder's period musical *The Emperor Waltz,* starring Joan Fontaine and Bing Crosby—and a postwar panoply of satins, silks, laces, and ermine—were nominated for the best-costume (color) category. "They were very good, very authentic," says Wilder. "She had a good sense of what photographed well. Edith was a first-class collaborator, always open to suggestions." Though she regarded her victory as a *fait accompli—Joan of Arc*'s "armor and sackcloth," by Dorothy Jeakins and Karinska, the other color nominees, did not pose a threat—from its inception the very idea of the award had racked her with anxiety. A colleague says that one day over lunch at Paramount, Edith had irrationally proposed that the Academy (in a complete break with established practices) distribute one costume-design award per studio. "She was that afraid of losing," he surmises.

On March 24, 1949, it was snowing in L.A. when Edith (smartly attired in a black faille high-necked gown embroidered with silver and gold elephants) and Bill arrived at the Academy Award Theatre on Melrose Avenue. Seventeen-year-old Elizabeth Taylor presented the trophy Edith was so poised to capture—and it went to Jeakins and Karinska. "It took a moment for me to realize that I had lost," Edith said. "Since I am not very emotional, no one knew I was in shock. . . . It simply never had occurred to me that somebody else could win that Oscar."

Edith rebounded quickly from her defeat and began even more assiduously to harness the power of Paramount's mighty star-building machinery to her own ends. "Edith did anything for publicity," says costume designer Bill Thomas. "And it paid dividends." Mina Mittelman, a designer's assistant at Western Costume in the 1960s, notes, "More than her colleagues she was a product of the big studios. Other designers—Adrian, Irene Sharaff, Dorothy Jeakins—were more brilliant. But they were not the types for self-promotion." A. C. Lyles adds, "Edie also got *us* a ton of publicity. Every several weeks, the department would think of something to ask her: Who's the most beautiful redhead? Are initials on pockets in or out? Whatever we sent to the papers would be immediately picked up. She came to be as big as any of the stars on the screen."

Edith, in fact, became a celebrity of the TV screen in the 1950s after Art Linkletter drafted her to be a regular guest on his hugely popular and long-lived (1945–69) CBS show, *House Party,* broadcast to a nationwide audience of 8 million to 10 million housewives. For a basic fee of $200 she doled out no-nonsense fashion tips, and plugged the latest Paramount releases by talking up the stars' wardrobes. "She was my dress doctor," says Linkletter. "The first time Edith was on she was so introverted, hiding onstage behind her heavy dark glasses, she didn't want to come back. Then I coached her until she felt comfortable. She went into the audience and gave them advice. Was she blunt with those women! When she began to feel the audience's affection, it became an aphrodisiac—she was hooked. It was remarkable to see this shy, retiring designer suddenly become a national personality! Before long she was branching out with fashion shows, columns, books."

It was not only her new, high-profile status that bolstered Edith's confidence. She also triumphantly avenged her 1948 Oscar rout by carrying off four consecutive best-costume awards, three for black-and-white and one for color, in the next three years. First came the 1949 Oscar for William Wyler's *The Heiress,* starring Olivia de Havilland. On Wyler's instructions, Edith had studied circa-1849 garments in New York costume institutes—research that materialized into what she felt was "my finest period piece."

In 1950, Edith won the best-costume (color) award for Cecil B. DeMille's *Samson and Delilah,* a picture which for her had been a joyless undertaking. Resentful of DeMille's insistence that she work with a "committee system" of seven or eight designers, she told journalist Norma Lee Browning, "There were times on DeMille pictures when I really didn't feel like a designer; I was just one of the flock." Other times she simply wanted "to slit his throat." On the same occasion Edith scored the best-costume (black-and-white) award for Bette Davis's Broadwa diva clothes in *All About Eve,* a movie sl did on loan-out to Twentieth Centu Fox.

Edith scooped up the fourth Acaden Award for 1951's *A Place in the Su.* starring Elizabeth Taylor. This pictu featured what was probably the sing most influential costume Edith ever d vised, a strapless, bouffant coming-o dress comprising yards of layered tul floating over a pastel underskirt, and bosom strewn with sprigs of fabric vi lets. "We made tie-ins for Miss Taylor outfits," Herb Steinberg, Paramount former head of advertising and publicit says. "We marketed them with speci ads and sold them throughout the cou try in department stores, and they wer manufactured with the Edith Head labe There was not a girl who graduate from high school that year who didn wear that dress."

Donfeld notes, "If you look at the co tume-design credits for those first fou Academy Awards, all of them, with th exception of *A Place in the Sun,* ar shared. *The Heiress* was with Gile Steele *Samson and Delilah* was with Doroth Jeakins, Gwen Wakeling, Elois Jensser and Gile Steele; and *All About Eve* wa with Charles LeMaire. And she ought t have shared credit for her last four films with the exception of *Roman Holiday.* This William Wyler picture offered Edit first crack at dressing the most beguilin new darling of Hollywood, Audrey Hep burn. After an initial costume meetin with the sylphlike starlet, who was stil playing Gigi on Broadway, "I was com pletely enchanted," Edith recalled. "I knev she would be the perfect mannequin fo anything I would make."

Edith must have felt that she and Hep burn were on their way to becomin a legendary team like Adrian and Garbo or Banton and Dietrich when Paramoun put her on Hepburn's second Hollywoo movie, Billy Wilder's *Sabrina* (1954) "We didn't choose her—she was automat ically assigned to all first-class pictures a Paramount," Wilder explains. Co-starrin Humphrey Bogart and William Holden the film was a latter-day Cinderella tal about a chauffeur's daughter who returns from a trip to Paris so chic and cultivate that she winds up marrying her father's millionaire boss's son. But, Edith lament ed in *The Dress Doctor,* "The directo broke my heart by suggesting" that while Hepburn was passing through Paris "she actually *buy* a Paris suit."

Wilder explains the change of plans:

"The kind of glamorous suit we needed for Audrey when she comes back imbued with the taste of Paris—Edith had no idea what it was." Hubert de Givenchy, on the other hand, "the newest, youngest, most exciting couturier" (Hepburn's words), understood exactly the kind of tailleur the clothes-loving actress and sophisticated director had in mind. At the *maison de* Givenchy, Hepburn selected for *Sabrina* what she later called "that jazzy suit," of Oxford-gray wool ottoman, as well as a black-and-white embroidered organdy ball gown and a black cocktail dress, fashioned from a ribbed cotton piqué and fastened by a tiny bow at each shoulder.

When, at Hepburn's invitation, Givenchy attended an L.A. screening of the movie, he was shocked to discover that, as the credits rolled, only Edith's name appeared next to the words "Costume Supervision." And at Oscar time, Edith shamelessly accepted her statuette for *Sabrina* without the slightest nod of acknowledgment to Givenchy. About the *Sabrina* award Wilder says, "It was the elegance of Audrey Hepburn that got Edith that Oscar. If Audrey wore nothing at all, Edith still would have won." It is true that the Academy rules required that heads of departments accept awards on behalf of any and all assistants working under them—and that clothes taken off an existing line (as Givenchy's *Sabrina* outfits were), as opposed to costumes designed specifically and only for a movie, were not eligible for Oscar consideration. But Edith went far out of her way in *The Dress Doctor,* to the press, in her retrospective fashion shows, and to anyone who would listen, to claim that the black cocktail dress, "whose boat neckline was tied on each shoulder—widely known and copied as 'the *Sabrina* neckline,'" was her innovation.

Interestingly, Paramount documents in the Academy library's *Sabrina* file prove that studio executives foresaw problems of authorship from the very start. In an internal memo of June 5, 1953, c.c.'d to Edith, Paramount's executive production manager Frank Caffey suggests to Russell Holman of the New York office that the Paris clothes "be bought as Hepburn's private wardrobe, and in no way should Paramount's name be used as it might involve screen credit." Another missive of the same date indicates that Edith had "advised Hepburn to stay away from dead black"—which of course she ended up wearing to great effect. So why did Edith persist in stealing credit from Givenchy? "Edith was very disappointed," says David Chierichetti (author of *Hollywood Costume Design*). "She thought Audrey Hepburn would be her ticket to staying in the business a little longer." Mina Mittelman says more pointedly, "She did it because it made sense for her to do it. Edith did what was necessary."

Three years later on *Funny Face,* the story of a mousy bookshop clerk who metamorphoses into a supermodel, Edith once again stubbornly refused to accept the harsh reality that Audrey Hepburn—and her director, Stanley Donen—preferred Givenchy to her. "We were stuck with her," says Donen. "She was built into the contract. I would have liked Givenchy to do the whole picture. She protested to Frank Freeman and D. A. Doran, the heads of Paramount production, trying to stop us from going to Givenchy. It was a very touchy subject—Audrey and I used to whisper about it a lot. If you do a picture about high fashion, you can't have Edith Head! Givenchy, of course, was soaring above the whole thing as if it weren't happening. I've never had a situation like that before or since. We had to make some kind of compromise, so we gave her Kay Thompson." The clothes-savvy Thompson, cast as a Diana Vreeland–ish editor, "hated the outfits Edith Head made for her," says Leonard Gershe, *Funny Face*'s screenwriter and contributing lyricist. "She thought they were so conventional, so ordinary. She was playing Diana Vreeland, after all, and D.V. would have worn something with flair and personal style."

At a pre-nominations meeting at the Academy, Donfeld recalls, Edith tried to have Givenchy's name removed from eligibility, claiming that everything he had provided for the production was taken "off the rack" at his couture house. This time, however, her powers of persuasion failed; Edith and Givenchy were nominated together for *Funny Face,* but they both lost to Orry-Kelly for *Les Girls.* Despite the fact that both Paramount and the Academy had officially recognized Givenchy, as with *Sabrina,* Edith "stuck around trying to take credit," Donen says. "When she gave interviews, she did her best to make it seem that, 'yes, I did *Funny Face.*' If she had just shut up, no one would have cared."

If Edith never convinced Audrey Hepburn that she was Givenchy's equal, the Paramount dynamo compensated for that setback when she snared Grace Kelly in 1954. And once Alfred Hitchcock (who collaborated with Edith on 11 pictures) cast the patrician blonde as quintessential ice queens in *Rear Window* and *To Catch a Thief,* the designer found in Kelly the consummate muse and mannequin of her career. Her beaded chiffon cocktail dress and filmy negligee ("Preview of coming attractions," Kelly says to Jimmy Stewart) in *Rear Window* are entrancingly memorable. But they are really only preambles to the bewitching black-and-white beach ensemble, vaporous ombré-blue silk-chiffon gown, and dove-adorned, gold-lamé-tissue *bal masqué* disguise Kelly's character models in *To Catch a Thief.* When Hitchcock first spied Kelly shimmering like a solar deity in this gilded strapless creation (made by Paramount's wizard-like head cutter and fitter, Arda Clure), the portly director exclaimed, "There's hills in them thar gold!"

Though Edith was cut to the quick when Helen Rose of MGM, the star's home studio, designed Kelly's wedding dress—"I never saw anyone so hurt," designer Moss Mabry says, though "Edith did end up doing Grace's going-away outfit"—Edith never stopped citing Grace Kelly and *To Catch a Thief* as her "all-time favorites."

Edith said that, for her, Hollywood's Golden Age began when it was presumed to have ended, in the 50s. Through discipline, drive, and what she considered her "psychiatrist's" insight into the mechanics of human nature she ingratiated herself with the whole Paramount hierarchy. And, as her fortunes ultimately depended on pleasing the stars, "she'd do anything to win over an actress," says costume designer Bill Thomas. *The Hollywood Reporter*'s Robert Osborne observes that she was the only one in town who could be both "subservient and behave like a star."

For many of the fresh young faces arriving at Paramount in the 50s, Edith—with her veteran's familiarity with the movie business and her professional knowledge of feminine charm—became a kind of "mother confessor," says Arlene Dahl. "Leading ladies were confiding in her all the time about their affairs with married co-stars. In her dressing room, you had no secrets—you were stripped bare. . . . You'd be surprised how many stars had bad hygiene before Edith got to them! . . . She knew before anyone else who was pregnant. Louella and Hedda probably had spies in there! . . . Grace Kelly and I were her pets; we'd make appointments with her at the same time. It was like a coffee klatch. Edith taught us everything from the bottom up, from the inside out. How to stand, how to hold the train of a dress. Grace went out with her boyfriend Oleg Cassini on her arm—he made the clothes she wore offscreen. But inside her head it was Edith—instructing her how to walk, what to do."

Unless they were at her house, Edith usually felt uneasy at industry social func-

Head

tions. "She came to my parties," says Tippi Hedren. "But invariably she ended up with my daughter and her cat, Puss-in-Boots." At Casa Ladera, she literally let her hair down—at her most relaxed, she greeted visitors in colorful peasant-style costumes with her long black hair parted and braided down her back. "There was something defenseless about her with her hair down," says Roddy McDowall. Though Herb Steinberg recalls, "She was a great Mexican cook," her Universal secretary Ruby Distel Graff sets the record straight. "About Edith's Mexican food . . . Yes, she did take credit for it. But most of it came from the Farmers Market!"

If Edith was not quite the cook she proclaimed herself to be, she managed just fine as a hostess anyway. As Arlene Dahl recalls, "She gravitated to creative people like Vincente Minnelli, or the conductor of the L.A. symphony and his wife. Jackson Pollock came a couple of times to Casa Ladera. Edith loved his colors." At their dinners Bill Ihnen would "sit back and enjoy Edith," Dahl says. "Her house was the only place where she could take center stage." The companionable couple remained childless, though Edith did feel her union with Bill had produced progeny of a sort. "She referred to her Oscars as 'my children,'" Dahl reports.

Bill officially retired in 1963, and he dedicated himself to painting and gardening. If, as writer Judy Balaban Quine, daughter of Paramount president Barney Balaban, says, there "never seemed to be a lot of physical intimacy between Bill and Edith," it was probably because her work was "her anchor and her center." David Chierichetti elaborates: "Edith, weirdly, went to a lot of trouble to make it seem as if she had a marriage of convenience. The truth is she was in love."

"I don't think there is such a thing as a good fashion designer who is nothing but a fashion designer," Edith told Gayle Baizer. "I think a fashion designer should do a lot of other things." In addition to *House Party* appearances, retrospective fashion shows, and college lectures—Nolan Miller attended classes given by her at Chouinard in 1952–53—Edith took on the unpaid job of wardrobe consultant to the Academy Awards in 1953, when the ceremony first went on live television. In 1959, Edith published *The Dress Doctor,* written with Jane Kesner Ardmore. Down to designing about 16 films a year, she threw all her surplus energy into pushing the memoir via a nationwide tour and a road show of her costume collection. Within two months *The Dress Doctor* landed on the best-seller list—where it might as well have been categorized as fiction. Most of the book's illustrations, billed as "sketches by Edith Head," had been executed by the wardrobe doyenne's loyal assistant, the librarian-like Grace Sprague. David Chierichetti says that Edith would often ask "Where did you get that?" when he made a comment on her work or life. If he answered, "*The Dress Doctor,*" Edith would respond, "You ought to know better than to believe that book!"

The era of the contract costume designer, like the epoch of the studio system itself, came irrevocably to a halt in the 60s. "Everybody was running out of jobs and pictures," Nolan Miller says. "But not Edith." At an age when other career women were complacently retiring, Edith, 65, was once again trolling for a new actress to rejuvenate her career—and she set her sights on Natalie Wood, whom she ended up dressing in seven pictures, some of which she had duplicitously snatched away from rival designers.

Not only did Edith never seem to be out of work, she never seemed to age either. In the course of her life, one source says, she had up to 11 face-lifts, performed by a Santa Barbara doctor. She took to wearing false bangs, probably to conceal a hairline that crept farther back with each trip to the plastic surgeon. She dyed her hair black, and though she came to regret the harshness of the shade, she would not alter it—and so, as the years passed, Edith seemed eerily unchanged. Ruby Distel Graff says, "In a business where you're over the hill at 40, she wanted to hang in as long as she could." Judy Balaban Quine adds, "Others, like Adrian, were always associated with a certain period, a certain look. They may have been remembered for *then.* Edith was someone who was there *now.*" Norman Lloyd, an actor and producer of Hitchcock's TV show, says, "Edith's strength was in dressing the character for the story—in advancing the plot through clothes. Hitchcock liked her work because, unlike that of Adrian or Jean-Louis, it was never outré. It was understandable, and didn't date."

In 1966, the Paramount that Edith had known for nearly five decades ceased to exist. Gulf & Western, in a dramatic takeover, bought up a majority of the shareholders' stock, Barney Balaban became a salaried employee, and Adolph Zukor, who had founded Famous Players in 1912, was kicked upstairs to become chairman emeritus. The glorious Paramount fabric vault was unceremoniously dismantled and job-lotted. When Edith's contract expired in 1967 after 44 years of service, she was asked to go. She left as quietly as she had come.

In 1962, Lew Wasserman, the most powerful agent in Hollywood, had bought Universal Studios and was in the process of upgrading it. Paramount alumni Alfred Hitchcock, Hal Wallis, Billy Wilder and Herb Steinberg had already defected to Universal, and their boss's wife, Edie Wasserman, says, "I conned Edith into coming." In her spacious new bungalow headquarters, Edith installed a Coromandel screen, a collection of miniature sewing machines, and a phalanx of Oscars theatrically lined up before a mirror. Edith explained, "There's nothing like a row of Oscars . . . for putting the fear of God into an actress who thinks she knows everything about dress designing."

Though her workload at Universal now dwindled to between one and 10 pictures a year, as always she had plenty of irons sizzling on the fire. She hawked her second book, *How to Dress for Success* (Random House, 1967), but its obsolete, pre-feminist advice limited sales. In 1966 she had been elected president of the Costume Designers Guild, where she served for three years. Around 1968, when Edith was in her early 70s, she started a column, "How Do You Look?," syndicated by New York *Newsday* to 40 papers. And there were also the costume fashion shows, now staged with the help of her faithful friend June Van Dyke, at Universal's 200-seat theater or on the women's-luncheon circuit. Eventually, Van Dyke and Head charged up to $10,000 plus expenses for these shows, which—with their ensembles billed as originals made for Clara Bow, Carole Lombard, Mae West, Ginger Rogers, and Elizabeth Taylor—were often as hokey as the films from which they purportedly came. "Some of the costumes weren't even by Edith," says interior designer Leonard Stanley. "Others were really bad reproductions of things she had done." David Chierichetti adds, "She knocked off a lot of things, and wouldn't even bother to match the originals. Last time I saw the dresses, most were copies and even the copies were worn out. Whenever Edith and June gave the shows, I would say, 'That dress was never in the movie.' And Edith would say, 'Get this straight—this is a phony show.' And the shows got phonier and phonier."

Edith's bungalow also became a scheduled attraction on the Universal tour. The

eteran designer loved to invite friends to nch, Donfeld says, asking them to pass y the bungalow just before noon, when ie tram made a regular stop. At the roke of 12, she'd fling open the door nd wave to her fans as a guide anounced over a loudspeaker, "Ladies and ntlemen, Miss Edith Head!" Anthony owell recalls that one day, while warrobe drones in the Universal workroom iled to the strains of a radio, the studio's nief designer suddenly came over the airaves. "Oh God," groaned one designer, here goes Edith yet again telling the orld how she invented the skirt."

Though her sketch artist Richard Hopper used to say that Edith would ave paid the studio to let her work, she d, in fact, continue to participate in any important movie projects, often aveling on location. She earned another scar nomination in 1969 for *Sweet harity,* with Shirley MacLaine, and in e same year, on loan-out to Twentieth entury Fox, costumed Katharine Ross *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.*

Edith was again nominated in 1970 for *irport;* the fact that she was able to come o with the movie's very au courant polyter double-knit miniskirts and bell-bottom ntsuits—looks that she actually abhord—is a testament to her herculean strug-e to keep up-to-the-minute. She relied n the much younger Richard Hopper to arn her if her designs looked *démodé,* id "she was dedicated to *Women's Wear aily,*" says Ruby Distel Graff. "It made r day if they gave her publicity."

One of Edith's most unlikely late-reer assignments was *Myra Breckinridge* 970), starring Mae West and Raquel elch. Costume designer Theodora van unkle was originally hired to do the ventieth Century Fox feature, but Mae est—at 78, half a decade older than lith—requested that Universal lend out r old pal from *She Done Him Wrong.* nn Runkle says, "One day I went in her fice and said, 'Edith, guess what? ey're doing a scene right now—you on't believe this. They've got a couple rnicating on the American flag, for od's sake!' Without missing a beat Edith id, 'What are they wearing?' "

The old girl had one last Oscar in her, . for the definitive comedy-suspense budd movie, *The Sting* (1973)—a tribute that ll raises many hackles in the costume-sign world. Jeanne Malone, who as the n's set girl was in charge of breaking wn the script, distributing and retrieving stumes, sending them to the cleaner's, and keeping track of sequence, says emphatically, "She didn't design a thread." Instead, Malone attributes all the men's costumes, which were assembled at Western Costume, to Peter Saldutti, Edith's former Paramount errand boy and the son of Western's head tailor, Jimmy Saldutti. "And the thick fur-felt hats were made by Borsalino in Italy. Peter did the suits, shirts, fabrics, buttons, linings, spats, and underwear. Edith took the sketches by Richard Hopper of Peter's designs to production meetings. The only female lead, Eileen Brennan, was dressed right out of stock. One evening as Andrea Weaver [the women's costume supervisor] and I were writing up the laundry, she said to me, 'If Edith gets an Oscar for this, I'm going to kill myself.' And I said, 'Well, you might as well buy the cyanide now!' "

At the Academy Awards, when presenters Peter Falk and Twiggy read Edith Head's name, the 75-year-old designer squeezed Donfeld's arm and whispered, "You're my good-luck charm!" before bolting for the stage. At the podium, Edith gave a speech as short as it was smug. "Just imagine," she said, "dressing the two handsomest men in the world and then getting this." Nolan Miller says, "The next day Vincent Dee, the head of men's wardrobe at Universal, ranted and raved. In an acceptance speech, the normal thing is to thank everyone who had helped with the costumes." To mollify the offended, Edith finally sent a note to the Motion Picture Costumers union newsletter thanking Peter Saldutti, Andrea Weaver, and Bernie Pollack (who had helped with Robert Redford's clothes) for their contributions. "Although she later admitted to me that she had handled *The Sting* affair unwisely," Chierichetti wrote in the L.A. *Times,* "she never stopped claiming publicly to have designed the film. . . . Edith was careful not to set foot in the men's department at Universal after *The Sting.*"

Michael Phillips, one of the film's producers, retorts, "Edith was 100 percent the designer—it was coming out of her head. She conceived and designed the wardrobe, sketched and presented the costumes. I was in on all the costume meetings."

Linkletter's *House Party* had aired its final show in 1969, movie projects were growing scarcer still—in 1974, the year after *The Sting,* Edith did only one film, *Airport '75,* with Gloria Swanson—and neither she nor her husband Bill was in sound health. Though she never spoke of it, Edith had been diagnosed with myelofibrosis of the bone marrow in January 1970, and Bill had prostate troubles. Yet around 1975, when *Fabricnews* founding editor and publisher Arthur Imparato proposed that Edith license her name to Vogue Patterns, Edith pounced on the opportunity. "It was the last big project of her life," says Judy Raymond, now senior vice president at Simplicity Patterns. Raymond, Edith, and the designer's increasingly threadbare costume fashion show hit the road, "from L.A. to Amarillo, to Sydney, Australia," the pattern executive says, touring chain sewing centers and department stores. Edith and her models—local girls cast for their passing resemblances to Grace Kelly or Elizabeth Taylor—even staged the costume show at the Smithsonian, where the real Liz Taylor introduced the designer while Senator John Warner scrutinized the proceedings from the front row.

On June 22, 1979, Bill, aged 91, died of bone cancer. Though, as Paddy Calistro writes in *Edith Head's Hollywood,* Edith attended a fashion show the day after Bill's death, the loss, in fact, devastated her. "She had very little life outside of her work except her husband," Chierichetti says. To keep her company, Edith acquired a Dalmatian whom she called Boppo—her pet name for her husband. Roddy McDowall reflects, "Edith was not a complainer. But without Bill it wasn't good. It wasn't right."

Even though Universal kept her on salary until the day she died, she worried about money, especially when faced with Bill's death duties. In order to hold onto Casa Ladera, she sold the two front lots at 1700 Coldwater Canyon. Having negotiated a $10,000 advance with E. P. Dutton, she started a memoir with Norma Lee Browning, the *Chicago Tribune*'s Hollywood columnist (a task eventually passed on, along with hours of taped interviews, to Paddy Calistro). In her dotage, Edith enjoyed every form of homage that came her way. She and June Van Dyke made a practice of frequenting swank restaurants, pretending it was Edith's birthday. "They always gave her something free," says Arthur Imparato.

From 1978 onward, Edith's bone-marrow condition deteriorated to the point where repeated blood transfusions were required. She took on one last movie, Carl Reiner's *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid,* released just after her death in 1982. The *film noir* spoof, dedicated to the designer, required that Edith create 40s-style clothes to sustain the look of the period footage Reiner spliced into the film. And so when she re-created an evening gown she had designed for Bar-

Head

bara Stanwyck in *Double Indemnity* nearly 40 years earlier, Edith, like a snake devouring its own tail, had come full circle.

As soon as she completed the picture, Edith entered Good Samaritan Hospital, where she died, with her housekeeper of 36 years, Myrtle Tyson (now 92), in attendance. The gross assets of the estate—which included the house (purchased by architect James Luckman in 1983 for $1,171,500 and re-sold in 1993 to Carrie Fisher for $2.7 million) and a portfolio of stocks and bonds—totaled more than $1,987,000, the bulk of which went to the Motion Picture & Television Fund. To the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Edith gave her Oscars as well as Bill's—a total of 10—along with documents, sketches, press clippings, publicity photographs, and an assortment of art, furniture, and books. She bequeathed the dubious costume collection to June Van Dyke, who unsuccessfully attempted to acquire "an extensive list of other items of value in decedent's home," a legal document states. Van Dyke's Edith Head costume collection is projected to be the basis of a licensed ready-to-wear and accessories line, the proceeds of which will be divided between Van Dyke's estate and the Motion Picture & Television Fund, which is raising money next month with a gala tribute to Edith in New York.

When Paddy Calistro, embarking upon *Edith Head's Hollywood,* went through Casa Ladera after Edith's death—Myrtle Tyson and her sister, Cleo, were at that time watching over the property—the writer peered into the French Provincial boudoir where Edith had reposed. "It was so creepy," Calistro says. "In a cupboard there was a row of three canvas heads, the kind you can stick pins into. And on the heads were three sets of bangs."

Donfeld also paid a postmortem visit to Casa Ladera. "I was wandering, remembering our good times. Myrtle was in the pantry with her sister. I passed the hammocks, side by side, where she and Bill read the Sunday paper. I found my way down the garden path to a low adobe barn with stables in the front. I went into the barn, and there was some baling wire stretched over a beam. Suspended from that wire on hangers in not-so-new plastic bags were dresses—a not-so-good replica of Elizabeth Taylor's *Place in the S* gown, the gold gown from *To Catch Thief,* clothes from *Samson and Delil* Some of the dresses were not even c ered in plastic. The room was dusty a drafty, and these dresses were gently blo ing in the breeze, swinging back and fo and turning on their hangers almost lik group of ghostly, giggly girls. . . . It wa very strange and haunting sight."

Indomitable Edith, the ultimate s vivor, outwitted, outlasted, and in ma cases outlived her more talented colleagu Irene, to whom Claudette Colbert turn when she snubbed Edith, leapt from a w dow of the Knickerbocker Hotel in 19 Orry-Kelly, whose plum assignment dressing Natalie Wood in *Gypsy* had in riated Edith, died in 1964 of a brok heart, Edith believed, over losing *My F Lady* to Cecil Beaton. But in her wani years, Edith—who, like many invetera liars, had a certain warped respect for t truth—offered up this disarmingly hon appraisal of her own abilities: "I knew was not a creative design genius. . . . I a a better politician than I am a desig er. . . . I was never going to be the worl greatest costume designer, but there w no reason I could not be the smartest."

Paley

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 220 *Day* (1985) was published. What distinguishes the latest collection from standard political fare is what sets her stories apart as well: Paley's genius for capturing the way people talk to each other across seemingly unbridgeable divides. "My feeling about people is close to the Quaker idea, that there is a light in every man and woman," says Paley, sitting at the cluttered kitchen table of her home in Vermont. "We should look at one another and expect that some of that light will shine for us."

In the America of *Just as I Thought,* Cops for Christ swap leaflets with Disarm for Human Life demonstrators, prostitutes sing lesbian love ballads to comfort a middle-class housewife imprisoned for protesting the Vietnam War, and a young, newlywed Paley holds a tiny black infant on a segregated bus in the Deep South, unconsciously foreshadowing the bond she would have with her African-American grandson half a century later. Paley, in Hanoi in 1969 to meet with North Vietnamese leaders and bring home three American P.O.W.'s, is urged by her Communist hosts to be less critical of her country. "Have you forgotten Emerson?" one young Vietnamese man cries out. "Have you forgotten Whitman? Jefferson?"

Paley's publisher is touting the book as autobiography; Paley says it's a mixture of old and new material, with some bits and pieces that friends found around her house. "They dug up stuff they knew I had that *I* didn't even know I had," she says, laughing.

"Grace's incredible accomplishment has to do with the distrust of the elevated," says Rick Moody, author of *The Ice Storm,* the novel on which the acclaimed Ang Lee film is based. "After I read Paley, I realized that it's possible to get energy out of colloquial rhythms and not to sacrifice elegance or beauty in any way. People think of me as this guy who writes about the Wasp suburbs, but that has been no hindrance when approaching the incredible vitality and richness of her rhythm. If you're a 20th-century writer, you can't not read this work. It's too important."

Grace Paley, who is embarrassed by such accolades—"Jesus Christ, why don't I know the boy? That's awfully nice"—has lived most of her life in Greenwich Village, the setting for many of her st ries, poems, and essays. But for near 30 years she's spent summers in The ford Hill, and in 1988 she moved the full-time. Her two-story cabin is su rounded by maples, hemlocks, a 30 year-old oak tree, snow-covered bi feeders, and a sweeping view of mou tains and fields. A narrow plank lea from a snowdrift to her front door. "H darling," Paley says, coming to greet m Her eyes are red-rimmed from a col and her curly white hair is a little tam than usual; she says it's from wearing cap. She's nearly lost her voice aft spending the weekend in New York Ci recording her stories for an audiotap series. But despite it all she's quite chee ful. The woodstove is belching out hea Her book, after much fiddling, is reac for publication. And it's her birthda which was announced on National Pu lic Radio this morning, prompting flurry of phone calls and flower delive ies. "I'm kind of lucky to be old at time when it's getting a better name she says with a grin, her Bronx acce undiluted by her years in the Vermo countryside.

Piles of correspondence and slips paper covered with Paley's writing a



GRACE UNDER PRESSURE

Paley in her two-story cabin with her husband, Bob Nichols. "If I don't have my notebook with me, I write on pieces of paper and put them in my pocket," Paley says. Her new book is a mixture of old and new material, with odds and ends that friends found around her house. "They dug up stuff they knew I had that *I* didn't even know I had."

attered everywhere—on the kitchen ta-e, in her bedroom, atop file cabinets. ccasionally, her little bits of paper fall n the floor, where her husband, Bob ichols, fishes them up and deposits em in a cardboard box he has labeled ith large block letters: CURRENT WRIT-G. DO NOT LOSE. "If I don't have my otebook with me, I write on pieces of aper and put them in my pocket," Paley onfesses, handing me a bowl of home-ade split-pea-and-barley soup. "When it lls out of my pocket is when Bob finds " Sometimes the box and all its con-nts get lost, which makes Nichols crazy d is enough to dismay any Paley fan.

"All this is tragic," says Nichols, a oughtful man with pure-white hair as ee-form as Paley's, windburned red heeks, and bushy black eyebrows. Nich-s, a writer and former New York City arks Department landscape architect, ho worked with Paley at the Green-ich Village Peace Center in the 1960s, a lifelong activist as well. Still, he ys, "The fact that she spends so much time on politics, and loses a lot of stuff, is just tragedy."

"He's probably right," Paley admits. "I wish I was less distractable." But she says her years on the barricades are as precious to her as the stories they inspired. "It's what life is about," she says. Her daughter, Nora, 48, told me that Paley's activism is inseparable from her writing—tear one out and you have nothing at all. "That's true," Paley says. "My kid said that? Absolutely! I've always worked with people that I, in general, loved—even folks I had big disagreements with. It could be compared to life in families, in some way."

Much of *Just as I Thought* is about Paley's family—her childhood on Hoe Avenue in the Bronx, and then, looking backward further still, her parents, Isaac and Manya Gutseit, who lived in turn-of-the-century Russia and were arrested and exiled for anti-czarist activities. Along with other political prisoners, they were released in 1905 shortly after the czar had a son, and they hurried off to America before he could change his mind. At 9, Grace Goodside (the name was Anglicized) joined the Falcons, an organization for Bronx socialists under 12. She wore blue shirts and red kerchiefs, and met with her preadolescent comrades to discuss injustice and sing the "Internationale," and, occasionally, "America the Beautiful" (their parents "were divided about that"). At 11, she helped her father and other men patrol their socialist bungalow colony in Mahopac, New York, after rumors spread that the Ku Klux Klan planned to burn crosses there. "It was our summer place," Paley recalls, "a community of mostly Jews and lefties. They used to sit on the dock and play chess and have big arguments in their bathing suits."

Paley's own politics run more toward a rebellious, stubborn pacifism—what she calls "the importance of not asking permission." In the preface to *Peacemeal,* the Greenwich Village Peace Center cookbook, she writes: "Certainly this

Paley

cookbook is for people who are not so neurotically anti-authoritarian as I am—to whom one can say, 'Add the juice of one lemon,' without the furious response: 'Is that a direct order?'" And yet she spent her early years writing poetry in the stiff, polite language of the British upper class. In 1939, when she was 17, Paley took a poetry class from W. H. Auden at the New School in New York. "I was using words like 'subaltern,'" she admits. When she finally built up the nerve to show Auden her work, he asked her if anyone she knew talked like that. "It went right to my heart. He didn't have to say anything more."

At 19, as America entered World War II, she married a tall, skinny fellow in the signal corps, cinematographer Jess Paley, and, after living with him in army camps for two years, settled in a basement apartment on West 11th Street in Greenwich Village. She had two "copper-haired, brown-eyed children," Nora and Danny, and spent her afternoons in Washington Square Park. Together with Bob Nichols, she worked to close the park to bus traffic: Nichols redesigned it after their victory. The park was also the site of one of Paley's first standoffs with the police. In the summer of 1957, the city decided to ban music in the park. Scores of guitar-strumming folksingers gathered in protest. When police moved in, swinging their clubs, one officer grabbed six-year-old Danny by the neck. "My mother seemed to appear out of nowhere," he recalls. Her feet planted in her trademark bantam-boxer stance, four-foot-11-inch-tall Paley looked up at the cop and yelled, "Get your hands off my kid." Danny, now 46, still marvels at the image. "She said it in such a way that he actually backed off."

Mostly, though, Washington Square was a place where Paley went to trade stories with other young mothers. "We sat on one side of the park, and the ladies who wore 'I Like Ike' buttons sat on the other side," Paley recalls. "We talked mostly about the children, really, and then little by little some of us became best friends. We talked about poor jobs, being alone, being dumped by a guy. If you needed a good doctor, if you needed an abortion, if you needed a baby-sitter—it was like a big, open-air personnel department, where people were useful to each other.

"Of course," she adds, "sometimes they didn't like each other."

Paley's first book of short stories, *The Little Disturbances of Man,* ushered these conversations—along with the Russian- and Yiddish-inflected arguments of her Bronx childhood—into American literature. She wrote the stories on her living-room table, in the precious bits of time between diapers, demonstrations, and dishes. "That's how I got started," she says. "I wrote these stories, and I got hooked on it. The short story's shortness is not what's important—except that it is, because then I get finished with it."

The book launched Paley's career. The next quarter of a century saw two more collections, two books of poetry, and one volume of poems and prose pieces, *Long Walks and Intimate Talks* (1991). A recent anthology of her short stories, *The Collected Stories,* was a finalist for the 1994 National Book Award. In its preface Paley describes her "three lucks." The first came in 1954, when she was sick enough for the children to stay in day care after school, but "not so sick that I couldn't sit at our living-room table to write or type all day." Soon, three of her first stories were typed, scratched out, and typed again. ("I was never sure of what she was doing," recalls Danny, "except that she made a lot of mistakes.")

The second luck came one day in her dark basement apartment when Ken M- Cormick, whose children often pla with Paley's kids, stopped by. He was editor at Doubleday, and his ex-wife l been badgering him to read Paley's stor He did, and returned a few weeks la with the news that, if Paley wrote se more stories, he would publish them. S came up with nine more, and he p lished her first book.

The third luck, Paley says, is that women's voices in her stories dovetai with the emergence of the feminist mo ment of the 1970s. "I was a woman w ing at the early moment when sm drops of worried resentment and no rage were secretly, slowly building," s writes. "This great wave would crest h a generation later, leaving men sputter and anxious, but somewhat improved the crashing bath."

A fourth luck, for her readers, is th Paley has always lived within noodgi distance of other writers, who ha pushed her to sift through her piles a pull out cut-and-pasted manuscripts. T day Paley is back at work on new sh stories. "It's the usual," she says. "A m ture of things that happened and thir that never happened and things that w happen."

But the work of the world tugs at h as well. She's off to Vietnam to m writers and help get their works transl ed. She's raising money for the War F sisters League, working to end censorsh of women writers around the world, a baby-sitting for her four-year-old gran son, Zamir, who, like her own childre calls her Grace.

Growing older doesn't daunt her the least. "All these people are writi books about aging, and they're only 6 Me and Tillie Olsen laugh our heads of she's 85, and I'm 75." She chuckl "People think they're aging when they s their first wrinkle. They should stay cal There are so many more to come." □

Madonna

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 212 life. Upon completing a project, most musical artists have to worry about what support their record companies will provide. Madonna's records, however, are distributed by her own label, Maverick, a company formed in 1992 with Freddy DeMann, then her manager. After a sluggish debut, Maverick has established itself as one of the few artist-involved entities in the business to have moved into big-league status. Madonna, with her usual candor, isn't shy about what she and DeMann faced. "Quite frankly," she says, "I didn't know how to do it. It was a lot of trial and error. We wasted time and energy. We wasted money. We made mistakes."

Yet in 1995, the company scored huge with 21-year-old Alanis Morissette, whose blockbuster first album, *Jagged Little Pill,* has sold more than 25 million copies. Last July Maverick made big noise again when the new CD from Prodigy—an English group it faced tough competition sign—debuted at No. 1 on the charts.

Although all new artists signed at Ma erick must be approved by Madonna a DeMann, both Morissette and Prodi were brought aboard by Guy Oseary, 25-year-old Israeli who, at the age of 1 had the chutzpah to use a fake address gain admission to Beverly Hills Hig School (he knew he'd make contacts) a who, last year, became the third memb of Maverick's ruling troika.

Oseary, who now also has the power

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Madonna

approve all artists signed, gives Madonna a great deal of credit. He emphasizes, as many do, her "inspiring work ethic," explaining her involvement in every aspect of her music. "Madonna's in the studio for every part of the process—when they master the record, mix it, everything. She's involved in a way that I've never seen, and she will give anyone a chance if she believes in them. She doesn't need the whole industry to tell her that this guy or that girl can do it." (Madonna's current co-manager, Caresse Norman—who had previously been her personal assistant—is another example of this.)

Madonna doesn't mince words about the difficulties of combining all the aspects of her career. "I'm always running," she says. "I'm like a chicken with my head cut off. I'm making my record, planning videos, doing photo shoots. I'm doing interviews. I'm trying to take care of my daughter. I'm reading scripts for movies, and Guy's calling me up, going, 'You've got to listen to this and make a decision by tomorrow morning.' And I'm like '*O.K.*' I have *no* free time."

She may soon have even less. Maverick is forming two new divisions—Mad Guy Television and Mad Guy Films—to be headed by Madonna and Oseary.

"With the movie business," Madonna concedes, "you can't get attached to anything. You have to say, 'If it happens, it happens.'" *Evita* wasn't the all-around critical and Oscar smash she might have hoped for, but it was a step up for her as a screen performer, and she proved that she could go out and sell a big movie pretty much all by herself. She stormed talk shows, even popping up on the couch of Oprah Winfrey, a woman whom Madonna described in *Truth or Dare* as "one reason for not wanting to live in Chicago."

That city will probably be her next on-screen home. She's enthusiastic about her upcoming outing as Velma Kelly to Goldie Hawn's Roxie Hart in the film version of the late Bob Fosse's musical *Chicago,* now in revival on Broadway. "I can do 'em in my sleep," she says of the Fosse-style dances. The project looks like a go. "I think it's happening," she says. "It's just been a really long process of finding the right director, and I think pretty much we've found somebody, but it's not a hundred percent sure." (Director Nicholas Hytner, whose credits include *The Madness of King George* and *The Crucible,* is reportedly the candidate.)

The Madonna Corporation does not go on vacation," says Alek Keshishian. That's an understatement. For ages, Madonna has been her own best nun, and sternest, most unforgiving taskmaster. "Madonna has been on an artistic treadmill, do you know what I mean?" asks Keshishian. "She is a stickler for organization, almost to the point where sometimes, as a friend, I want to shake her and go, 'Stop making the lists, and who cares that between two and three o'clock you've got to make the following 12 phone calls?' You understand why—she's a huge corporation."

Apparently, not friends, nor enemies, nor bumps along the way have the power to get Madonna to abandon her daily work and exercise rituals. As mentioned, her new thing is yoga. Ingrid Casares, who met Madonna around *Sex* time and who remains an all-around cohort, sometimes attends yoga classes with her pal. It's not always a Zen paradise. "There we are, about 15 people in the class, and everything seems fine, when suddenly I hear M whispering, 'Ingrid, switch places! Look behind you.' I turn around, and sure enough, there's a huge crowd of people gathered around the window, staring. But she doesn't want this to interrupt the class, so she takes my spot behind a column, where she can't be spied, and we keep going." No distractions allowed.

What is it that Madonna has—or doesn't have—that makes her so dogged? I ask Liz Rosenberg about times when her client couldn't keep up her daily regimen, or occasions when she was too overwhelmed to stay on track. Rosenberg says that if Madonna has had these moments she's never seen them. "Sometimes Madonna would say to me, 'Don't you think I get depressed? I'm on the treadmill *dying*.' But the fact is that she's on the treadmill."

Keshishian says, "With Madonna, there's nothing that's going to cancel her day. She has the same discipline whether she's well or unwell. Whether she's had a disastrous phone call or the worst night, she is at her yoga every morning. There is almost no self-destructiveness in this woman."

I point out that it seems to be in the natures of creative people to self-destruct or develop problems with food, drugs, alcohol. "What she's got is structure," Keshishian answers. "It's her way of making sure she doesn't go into a place that's dark and negative." Ingrid Casares adds, "She acts out by being constructive." She's addicted to her discipline.

One thing demolishes Madonna's w power: candy. (Her father must ha tried to limit her consumption.) "S loves Hot Tamales, Chuckles, all kinds Starbursts, any kind of bubble gum, Tw zlers, white chocolate," says Casares. see the way she looks while she's eati it, and she *loves* it."

She doesn't like to see her friends se destruct—and she won't watch it. "Wher was going through a drug phase," sa Casares, "Madonna was not going to t erate my being self-destructive, and didi speak to me until I was ready to get help and then she was the person I called." A ter Casares got sober, the friendship grev

This Puritan strictness doesn't exact jibe with the image Madonna projec when she's breaking rules. But she ca take the leaps because she doesn't have worry about going over the cliff: she's g the structure to keep her from free fa And the discipline comes from the plac which also sparked her rebellion.

Echoing Madonna, who points out h father's emphasis on discipline and doi things well, Christopher Ciccone says, think our father, who is the son of imm grants, spent most of his time preparin us for the rest of our lives. I don't thin he taught us things that we couldn't us The things I learned from him we honor, loyalty, and the value of th truth: all the things that surround th ideas of love and affection, but not lo and affection themselves. Our father concern was our survival. He taught discipline."

Chris doesn't give spin, which is probb bly one of the reasons his sister has wan ed him around. They've fought the sam battles. "Most of our aesthetic is rebellic against what we grew up with, America or Colonial—I mean the 70s version Colonial, the spindle-back chairs, the fak spinning wheel in the corner, the woode icebox that held the records. We went church all the time. We went to Sunda school, we went to catechism, and durin Lent we went to church every day. Ou sense of art, drama, and decadence a came from this. So did our sense of th power of secrets that lie in all the dar corners. All of that came from church."

Dark corners have always draw Madonna. Maybe because she ha carried some of their secrets for a lor time. She has often spoken about the in pact of her mother's death when she wa five years old, and has told of alway keeping a picture of her mother by he bed. She has written songs about alway feeling the loss of her mother inside he

t's not hard to picture the young Madonna and her family trying to deal ith a situation that represents many of ur worst fears. When her mother died of reast cancer, the disease was still treated y almost everyone as an unspeakable hor-or. Madonna understood little about what as happening except that her mother was one. There was no good-bye, and perhaps ie was left with feelings so big that they ad to be buried, run away from.

There was guilt, as we know from ings Madonna has said in the past. For istance, she has described giving her sick nother a pounding on her back when she anted to play and did not understand hy her mother couldn't join in. Madon-a, who says on *Ray of Light* that her nother still "haunts" her, has named the oets Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton as er favorite writers during her teenage ears, and when I read the story of the ncident described above, I thought of iese lines from Sexton's poem "The Double Image":

On the first of September she looked
at me
and said I gave her cancer.
They carved her sweet hills out
and still I couldn't answer.

When her mother died, Madonna had n extra sort of burden to carry which nade her feel especially hurt and espe-ially selected: she had been christened ith her mother's name, which they nared with the Virgin Mary.

I ask Madonna what she knew about er mother. "I was told that my mother as very musical," she says, "and that she oved to dance, and that was that. She was nto being a mother, but that doesn't mean ou can't have an artistic soul. I'm sure ie did, but not in any ambitious way."

Madonna, incredibly, remembers no nusic as being significant to her during er childhood. And there aren't that nany movies which she recalls. But there one which she says was important: *To Kill a Mockingbird.* "I just completely re-ated to Scout," she says. "Basically she as this little girl who was surrounded by ll this insanity, from Boo Radley hiding ehind the door to the sadness and vio-nce all around. She was always asking er father questions. I wanted my father o be Gregory Peck."

Needless to say, her father wasn't Greg-ry Peck. And, unlike Peck's character, tticus Finch, Madonna's father remar-ied. In *Truth or Dare,* when he and Madonna's stepmother come backstage, ne senses the years of tension. And in watching that film, one can also become exhausted by the way Madonna runs and runs, driving herself forward. Clearly that started a long time ago. Early on, one might have spotted many of the traits that have been present in her personality as a star. For example, her artistic determination was evident when she began dance classes. She'd hated the music lessons that her father pushed on all the kids. "I couldn't sit still during those piano lessons," she tells me. "I wanted to flail my limbs and I had to beg and cajole to go to dance class, and eventually I got to go. Ballet classes, jazz, tap, modern, and all that. But wherever these classes were in the area, I found a way to get there."

"I don't think anybody in that household encouraged Madonna," says Keshishian. "The will of somebody who comes from that big a family and does what she's done is remarkable. She became, I think, like the worst stage mother could have been."

I remember hearing about Madonna in the early 80s. She was part of the downtown scene and had hung out at clubs like Danceteria and the Paradise Garage. She was friends with quite a few of the people whom I knew, as well as a number of emerging artists whose work was a big part of what I was covering in *Artforum* magazine, which I edited. They included people such as Futura 2000, Fab Five Freddy, Keith Haring, and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Madonna was Basquiat's girlfriend for a while. But it didn't last, and she tells me that when they broke up Basquiat made her return the paintings he had given her. He let her keep one, which she now describes as her most prized possession.

It's a little surprising when you consider how quickly this loner from the burbs of Detroit—a creature who, to this day, uses "dorky" as an adjective—fit into the world of these intensely urban bohemians. You might call it her first transformation. But this was clearly where she wanted to be, having spent her life in a state of admiration of painters, writers, and poets. It's not clear, even now, whether it is the actual work of these creative people which fuels Madonna, or whether it is their self-presentation and passion which compel her. She does not seem to have been born with the classic self-destructive artistic personality; she feeds her drive with Catholic self-denial and then rebels publicly in ways that don't appear to threaten her solid core. This charged-up ambition was off-putting to some of the cooler creative types she met in the early days.

Recording executives, however, loved it. When an acquaintance named Michael Rosenblatt, an executive at Sire Records, talked Madonna up to his boss, company chief Seymour Stein, she didn't delay her approach; Liz Rosenberg recalls that although Stein was in the hospital with a heart infection, "Madonna just barreled into his room, and Seymour fell in love with her and signed her."

Rosenberg will always remember her first meeting with Madonna. "You felt her fearlessness, but she didn't have two cents. We used to give her cab money. She probably pocketed it all and took the train. She looked like a little doll with her stockings, and the schmatte, and the bow, and the rubber bracelets. I loved the belief she had in herself."

At first, executives at Sire—and at Warner Records, its parent company—weren't gung-ho about putting their weight behind her. Rosenberg remembers people saying, "Oh, don't let her go on the road. She doesn't know what she's doing. She'll embarrass the company." But it wasn't only the road tours that would set Warner on its ear. The notorious episodes that attended Madonna's climb to fame must have had corporate honchos regretting that bomb shelters were no longer a part of American life. Yet, whatever the controversies, no up-and-comer ever grabbed the ball like Madonna. She made herself into a major celebrity with heart-stopping style—defying the expectations of those who saw her as a flash in the pan. Still, she took some getting used to. Rosenberg invited a male friend along to the rehearsal for the first MTV Video Music Awards, in 1984. Madonna, rolling around the floor of the stage in a wedding dress, gave a preview of her showstopping performance, and Rosenberg's pal predicted, "Her career is over before it started."

That refrain has been uttered as often as Madonna has repeated some of her songs' signature motifs—such as one of her most frequently recurring images: running. But she has shown that she can take the heat. When *Playboy* and *Penthouse* obtained nude photographs of the star, her response was: "So what? I'm not ashamed." When the Vatican tried to censor her *Blonde Ambition* tour, she refused to bow. And after *Sex,* she came out slugging. On *Bedtime Stories,* the CD that followed, she included a song called "Human Nature." "I'm not your bitch," Madonna declared in its chorus, "don't hang your shit on me."

It's the fearlessness that makes her a star. "I cannot imagine walking into a

room and feeling like this girl did," recalls Liz Rosenberg. Few of us can—and that's what makes Madonna. But she has to keep stoking her own flame.

Madonna's metamorphoses have become legend as she has shuffled through our culture's fat deck of accumulated images. She's snapped up poses, postures, and attitudes, sometimes dropping them quickly (rapper's silver tooth cap), sometimes incorporating them more permanently (platinum Hollywood hair). And transformation is part of Madonna off-camera too. Talk to her and you'll notice the falling into and out of accents and lingoes: on a busy day, you can hear the sound of Michigan, the in phrases of Manhattan gay boys and street kids, inflections worthy of the Queen Mother. Lately, in her elegant mode, she sometimes relies on the kind of Great Lady diction they taught at MGM.

Like photographer Cindy Sherman—whose early work was recently seen at the Museum of Modern Art in a Madonna-sponsored exhibition—Miss Ciccone has been acting out a spectrum of women's roles, which could be interpreted as a search for the self. Or if one wants to get postmodern about it, she's mirroring the culture's own fixation with celebrity. I think Madonna's chameleon act is rooted in something more primal. She's been searching for self-realization and to be seen and recognized for who she really is.

What makes a person feel so invisible that he or she fashions a life in which cameras click whenever he or she is spied? It has something to do with being seen, a necessity if one feels that his or her true self has never been recognized. When lonely Narcissus stared at his reflection, he was not only gazing at his beauty but also making certain that he existed. Madonna was not seen by her mother; she had to imagine her there. Her father's vision of his daughter was, one might speculate, likely clouded by his late wife's memory and his Catholic idea of what Madonnas are. His daughter was hidden behind her own name.

Throughout *Ray of Light* she searches for a way to fill all the voids. *Truth or Dare* showed us Madonna going to her mother's grave and putting her head on the tombstone. The moment evokes loss, but it's picturesque, like a sad postcard. She doesn't give us the kind of detail that would make it visceral. She wasn't ready to go there. Now she is. "Mer Girl" goes right into the hidden tears and fears she's run from. ("Mer" refers to mermaid and is French for the sea.) She wrote the song when she visited Michigan recently for a family gathering on the occasion of her grandmother's 85th birthday.

"I started writing it," she tells me, "when I was at my father's house. I went running and it started to rain, so I went to a cemetery near where my mother and I grew up. It's not the cemetery where she is buried, but I used to go there a lot. The rain kept coming down. There was the blackest sky you've ever seen. I went against the instinct to run away, and just stayed there as the rain got to the leaves, and everything became heavy and muddy.

"When I got back home, I was feeling this incredible sense of melancholy. Everybody had left the house, and I was happy to have the silence. That's when I wrote 'Mer Girl.' It was only six lines at the time. Later I heard the music that William Orbit had written to go with it. I was back in L.A., and just laid on my bed playing the music on a boom box, over and over and writing and singing and redoing the song until I got it right. Then I went into the studio and did it."

Madonna's previous songs about her mother—"Inside of Me" and "Promise to Try"—are all preambles to "Mer Girl." Here Madonna faces the death, and faces what it has done to her:

> And I smelt her burning flesh
> Her rotting bones
> Her decay
>
> I ran and I ran
> I'm still running today

Lourdes seems to have allowed Madonna to feel something that she started looking for years ago, when she began trying to fill the vacancy left by her mother's death. Having the baby gave her, at the very least, what she calls "a moment of stillness" when she was forced to allow herself to slow down, step away, and surrender.

In "Swim," the second song on *Ray of Light,* she sings:

> I can't carry these sins on my back
> Don't wanna carry any more
> I'm gonna carry this train off the track
> . . . Gonna swim to the ocean floor

She is definitely moving on, leaving behind the past, including the enormous burden of the myths she accumulated during the first phase of her career. She may no longer be the person her fans stereotype. "My relationship with r fans is always changing," she says, "t cause I am."

Will the new record work? Althou female singers such as Jewel a Sarah McLachlan have been making t news, it's been an uncertain year for fem stars at Madonna's level. And Madon has always separated herself from the male balladeers whose soaring love son are selling big. "Oh God," she to Keshishian. "It's so hard for me and n father to understand each other. I mea his favorite female artist is Celine Dion."

Several years ago, when the Hubb telescope was first used to photograph pr viously unseen galaxies, the romance of t unknown hit art and fashion. Images the cosmos have become ubiquitous. Wi its techno productions evoking intergala tic sights and spiritual insights, *Ray Light* is completely of the moment. M donna's ability to hear what's up, make pop, and take it mainstream is still unfa ing. She doesn't miss a thing. (Ingr Casares sometimes has to go out to h car to make personal phone calls becau Madonna's hearing is so sharp.) Peop talk about Madonna's visual sophistic tion, but I believe it is her ear for th sound of what's new and the arrangemen that transform her words into vital, breat ing images which have allowed her to b come such a superstar.

During my interview with Casare Tommy Mottola—the chief of Sony Mus and the arch-rival of Madonna's frien at Warner's—stopped by our table Moomba to declare, "'Frozen' is nothin less than a smash hit." At a party, I hea Gwyneth Paltrow praising "Drowne World." The new Madonna is definite generating word of mouth. Recentl Madonna and Casares decided to te some remixes at the anniversary party f Liquid in Miami. "It was midnight Casares tells me. "There was a big cak and fire-eaters, drag queens, people o stilts—you name it. The crowd was totall mixed: straight, gay, Latin, Cuban, blac white. Then, all of a sudden, you hea the very beginning of *Ray of Light.* On people realized that it was her, they wer really crazy. Even the mayor of Miar started dancing. At six o'clock in th morning, I was still pushing people out.

"Maybe I'll pick up some new inte est," Madonna tells me flatly, clearly su duing her expectations for the CD. It six P.M. The nanny has brought the bat home, and her mother has calls to retur Before I know it, she's left the room.

And she does not say good-bye. □

Credits

Fashion

Cover: Madonna's Lucien Pellat-Finet sweater from Lucien Pellat-Finet, Angela Pintaldi necklace from Bergdorf Goodman, both in N.Y.C.; Elsa Peretti diamond earrings from Tiffany & Co. stores nationwide.
Page 56: Bottom left, see credits for pages 204–5; right, see credits for cover.
Page 60: Carl Bernstein styled by Jennifer Lee; David Margolick styled by Kim Debus for Jam Arts.
Page 72: Ingrid Sischy styled by Kathy Kalafut for Susan Price Inc.; Judy Bachrach styled by Barbara Zatcoff for T.H.E. Artist Agency.
Page 76: Suzanna Andrews styled by Tina Skouras.
Page 136: Gucci clothing from Gucci stores nationwide.
Page 191: Francesca Neri's Giorgio Armani dress from Giorgio Armani, N.Y.C.
Page 202: Left, costumes by Catherine Zuber; wardrobe by Penny Davis and James Nadeux.
Pages 204–5: Madonna's Voyage cardigan from Bergdorf Goodman, Marni pants from Henri Bendel, both in N.Y.C.; Elsa Peretti diamond earrings from Tiffany & Co. stores nationwide.
Page 207: Chloé top and skirt from Chloé, Paris; for Lawrence Steele mules, call (392) 8646-4818 (Milan, Italy); necklace by Sage (represented by the Metropolitan Design Group), from Ice Accessories, Brentwood Gardens, Calif.
Pages 208–9: Anna Molinari for Blumarine sweater by special order from Voga, N.Y.C.; Elsa Peretti diamond earrings from Tiffany & Co. stores nationwide.
Pages 210–11: Isabel Toledo top from Barneys New York, Prada skirt from Prada, both in N.Y.C.
Page 213: Narciso Rodriguez top from Bagutta, Prada skirt from Prada, TSE dress from TSE, all in N.Y.C.
Pages 222–28: Brian Leetch's, Wayne Gretzky's, and **Steve Yzerman's** Calvin Klein T-shirts from Saks Fifth Avenue stores nationwide.

Beauty and Grooming

Cover: Madonna's makeup and nail polish from Clinique. On her eyes, Pair of Shades Eye Shadow Duos in Seashell Pink and Fawn Satin; on her lips, Glosswear in Raspberry Jam; on her nails, Glossy Nail Enamel in Cherub. Delia Bernerdino for Stella's Salon.
Page 56: Bottom, see credits for cover.
Page 60: Carl Bernstein's and David Margolick's grooming by George Kyriakos for Sally Harlor.
Page 72: Ingrid Sischy's makeup by Assumpta Clohessy for Susan Price Inc.; Judy Bachrach's hair and makeup by Cathy Kades for T.H.E. Artist Agency; George Rush's grooming by Tina Turnbow for Pix Producers.
Page 76: Suzanna Andrews' hair and makeup by Maria Verel for Art and Commerce.
Page 136: Lisa Mitchell for Vernon Jolly Inc.; James Kaliardos for the Agency.
Page 172: Didier Malige for Frédéric Fekkai Beauté; Mariella Smith-Masters for the Vartali Salon.
Page 191: Francesca Neri's hair styled with Aveda's Purefume Brilliant Anti-Humectant Pomade. All makeup from Elizabeth Arden. On her eyes, Eyeshadow Duo in Dawn and Dusk; on her lips, Exceptional Lipstick in Shell.
Page 202: Left, hair by Paul Huntley and Carol Morales; makeup by Angelina Avallone.
Pages 204–13: See credits for cover.
Pages 222–23: Michael Richter's, Brian Leetch's, and **Bryan Berard's** grooming by Assumpta Clohessy; **Pat LaFontaine's** and **Jeremy Roenick's** grooming by Gita Bass; both for Susan Price Inc. **Bill Guerin's** grooming by Kate Best.
Page 225: Wayne Gretzky's grooming by Assumpta Clohessy for Susan Price Inc.
Page 226: Mats Sundin's grooming by Timothy Johnson for Utopia; **Niklas Sundstrom's** grooming by Alexis Kelly; **Peter Forsberg's** grooming by Assumpta Clohessy for Susan Price Inc.; **Tommy Salo's** grooming by Kate Best.
Pages 228–29: Brendan Shanahan's, Steve Yzerman's, and **Scott Stevens's** grooming by Assumpta Clohessy; **Martin Brodeur's** grooming by Gita Bass; both for Susan Price Inc.
Page 239: Alec Wildenstein's grooming by Assumpta Clohessy for Susan Price Inc.
Page 274: Matt Lauer's grooming by George Kyriakos for Sally Harlor.

Photographs and Miscellany

Page 22: From Gamma-Liaison.
Page 64: Bottom, from Outline.
Page 96: From Sygma.
Page 104: From Sygma.
Page 117: From U.P.I./Corbis-Bettmann.
Page 120: From the Image Works.
Page 128: © 1998 by the Man Ray Trust/ADAGP; print courtesy of Sotheby's.
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Page 142: By Porter Gifford/Gamma-Liaison (store); courtesy of Gucci (purse, shoe); by Corina Lecca (sweater); Niall McInerney (thong); M. Chandoha Valentina (Ford); all others by Dan Lecca.
Page 156: Large photograph from Sygma; inset, right, from *The Fauquier Citizen*/Sygma.
Page 159: Right, courtesy of the Great Meadow Polo club.
Page 166: Bottom, from Sygma.
Page 174: Inset from A.P./Wide World Photos.
Page 178: From A.P./Wide World Photos.
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Page 187: Center, from International Media Associates.
Page 196: Left, by David Kelly; right, by Jeffrey Mayer/Star File Photo.
Page 198: Left, by David Kelly; right, by Lawrence Schwartzwald/Sygma.
Page 202: Right, top to bottom, courtesy of Comedy Central, by Brian Smale, courtesy of Onward Kashiyama U.S.A., Inc.
Pages 214–15: Left, from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston/Superstock; right, from Stock Boston.
Page 216: Painting from Corbis.
Page 217: Top, from Reuters/Corbis-Bettmann; bottom, from the *Boston Herald*
Page 218: Top and bottom, from Sygma.
Pages 222–29: Stefan Beckman for Exposure
Pages 228–29: Set design by KLAD.
Page 230: From MPTV
Page 231: From Globe Photos.
Page 233: From MPTV.
Pages 234–35: From the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (costume sketches, Ihnen); by David Chierichetti (Davis, Lamour, masquerade dress); Bud Fraker/MPTV (folk garb); from the Kobal Collection (drawing board); from Movie Still Archives (Hitchcock, workroom); from Photofest (Rogers, Stanwyck, Swanson, Taylor); from U.P.I./Corbis-Bettmann (MacLaine); by Bob Willoughby (Loren).
Page 241: Top to bottom, from *Time* magazine, from *Paris-Match*/Scoop, from Gamma-Liaison.
Pages 242–43: Large photograph from Lapi/Roger-Viollet.
Page 246: Top and second from top from *Paris-Match*/Scoop.
Page 247: From A & C Anthology.

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Vanity Fair № 451 (ISSN 0733-8899). The magazine is published monthly by The Condé Nast Publications Inc., Condé Nast Building, 350 Madison Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10017
Steven T. Florio, President and Chief Executive Officer; David B. Chemidlin, Treasurer; Jill Henderson, Secretary. Periodicals postage paid at N.Y., N.Y. 10001, and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as International Publications Mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash. Sales Agreement No. 33332. Subscriptions: In the United States and its possessions, $18 for one year, $34 for two years. In Canada, $32 for one year, including GST and HST where applicable Registration No 123242885 Elsewhere, $37 payable in advance. Single copies: $3.50 in the United States, $4.00 in Canada. For subscriptions, address changes, and adjustments, write to *Vanity Fair*, Box 53516, Boulder, Colo. 80328-3516
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Planetarium

Michael Lutin tells Pisceans to expect at least one more miracle

PISCES FEB. 19–MARCH 20

There have been moments during the past year when you could have sworn you were about to lose it and finally become that vegetable you've been threatening to become. As usual, though, with Pisces when the clock is about to strike its final midnight, you pulled through splendidly and made yet another spectacular comeback. With Jupiter in your sign all this year, such a miracle is destined to happen at least once more. You've got a heavy 12th-house vibration at the same time, however, so please, in the name of Heaven, don't push your luck.

ARIES MARCH 21–APRIL 19

How inspiring you are, with all your focus, determination, and unshakable dedication to self-improvement, not to mention your zeal in fighting for the downtrodden. It's positively heroic. And with a benefic planet behind your sun, you should also have the protection of spirit guides or whatever else comes to your rescue when you've been bad or self-destructive. You should be aware, however, that Mars is transiting the south node this month. In plain English, that means you still have a couple of sneaky vices that bear watching.

TAURUS APRIL 20–MAY 20

A vast majority of the people who early in this century resisted the telephone, the motorcar, and motion pictures were very likely Tauruses. Now, on the brink of a new millennium, Uranus and Neptune are forcing you to deal with even wilder changes. While these planets can stimulate your growth by bringing unexpected and shocking reversals, adjusting to change, as everyone knows, is not your favorite pastime. Even if progress is all just a secret plot to invade your privacy and control your mind—as some Tauruses believe—surrender or be left in the dust.

GEMINI MAY 21–JUNE 21

After all those years of not knowing what the hell you were doing in this world, the arrival of Neptune in your 9th house heralds the opening of the doors of perception. Your consciousness will expand, and your mind will entertain possibilities you never dreamed you could ever grasp or accept. While it makes some Geminis nervous even to contemplate the fact that they might actually become deep thinkers, the religious and philosophical implications of this prospect could send other members of your sign off to the Holy Land on a bus tour.

CANCER JUNE 22–JULY 22

With your thoughts at their most spiritual and intellectual right now, an exploration of higher issues should prove very rewarding. But with two outer planets rising above the lunation in your solar 8th house, you had better be prepared to leave yourself open to what some would consider lower forms of thinking and sensing. Your façade of respectability notwithstanding, you are going through a wholly unconventional phase of your life, especially with regard to the ways in which you intend to satisfy your desires. Just be prepared.

LEO JULY 23–AUG. 22

Recent circumstances have forced you to behave angelically, but you can take that kind of thing for just so long. With Mars, Jupiter, and the dragon's tail all in your 8th house, your passions should be getting hotter than chestnuts on an open fire. And a good thing, too, considering all the painful rejections you've had to endure lately. However, the key to success in business and personal relationships for Leos now is to be able to accept people on *their* terms, which means there are absolutely *no* guarantees. Can you hack it?

VIRGO AUG. 23–SEPT. 22

Your 6th house is buzzing with a message from above telling you to plunge into new, glamorous challenges at work and continue following your latest wacky diet. Being a grown-up has never been easy. It's no fun to have to keep giving and giving and then to get zilch in return or, worse, some crummy little doohickey that's supposed to say "We appreciate you, Dad" or "Mom, we love you." Keep your chin up. Anytime now you can expect the universe to turn around and plant a big, fat kiss on your cheek. Be grateful.

LIBRA SEPT. 23–OCT. 23

It is the assumed, fervent wish of every card-carrying Libra to bring people together in win-win situations, where nobody walks away mad. Evolved members of your sign know how to make that happen. Even though you yourself have experienced serious separations and confrontations, or are about to, with the sun in Libra, you should feel blessed to have the talents to express yourself creatively and avoid hostile situations such as court fights over the division of property. In fact, if you lead honestly with your heart, you might even come out on top.

SCORPIO OCT. 24–NOV. 21

You don't need a college education or psychedelic drugs to see that your home life is going through huge changes. And, unless you're a totally dimwitted Scorpio, you don't need earthquakes and floods tearing across your living room to let you in on the little secret that your cozy family scene will never be the same again. How could it be? With the rulers of your 4th and 5th houses transiting the 4th for at least the next five years, you're certainly going to be emotionally shaken up from time to time. Homeowner's insurance will help considerably.

SAGITTARIUS NOV. 22–DEC. 21

If you are experiencing restlessness, you can blame it on outer planets transiting your 3rd house. The itch you are feeling cannot be allayed by simple scratching, because its source is located deep in your soul. When you're home you can't wait to get out, but as soon as you arrive at whatever place it is that you were so hot to get to, you're champing at the bit to turn around and go right back. This is not pathological behavior. Your mind is simply hungry for stimulation now, and no way are you going to be satisfied sitting by the fire making pot holders.

CAPRICORN DEC. 22–JAN. 19

The presence of two outer planets in your house of finances demands unique approaches toward all fiscal policies and decisions. You are entering a new era of financial management. "Uh-oh," groan Capricorns the world over. "What *now?*" For the better part of 1998, Neptune will hover between the last degrees of your sign and the first degrees of your 2nd house, and it will remain in the 2nd house for a good decade. During that time new opportunities to make money will come to you, as will novel methods for throwing it away.

AQUARIUS JAN. 20–FEB. 18

Wow! You have not only Uranus, the upside-down planet, passing through Aquarius, but also Neptune. How long will they be there? Don't ask. The transits have barely begun. In terms of your ability to go on acting like a normal person, make peace with the fact that for the time being you may as well forget the bell curve, because if you want to know your place relative to what society considers normal, you have to look way over at the edges of the graph. This is actually very good news. The charade is over at last. Relax.

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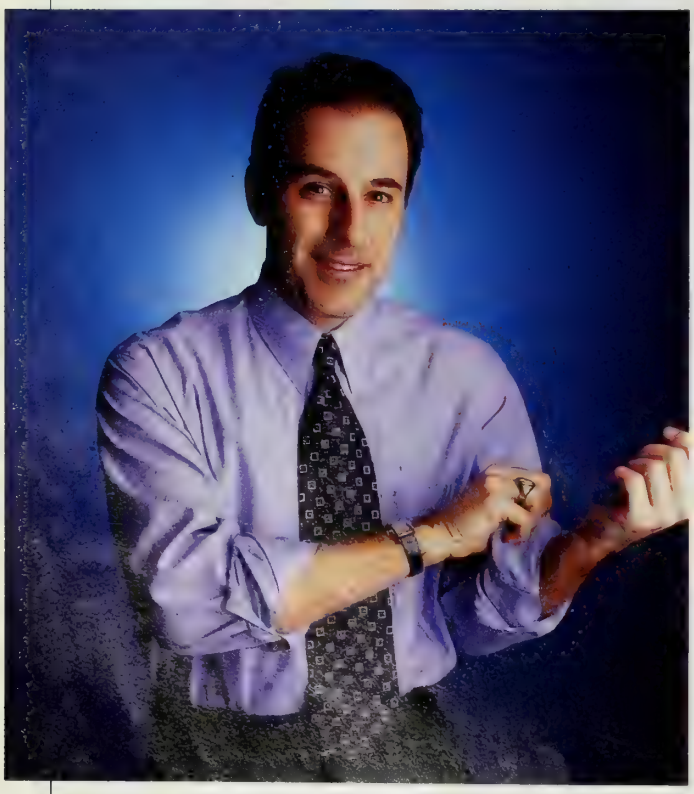
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Matt Lauer

Since Matt Lauer joined Katie Couric as co-host of NBC's *Today*, ratings have soared, and fans—especially females—have swooned. This month the golf-obsessed anchorman takes a few minutes away from NBC Studio 1A to reflect upon off-air passions as diverse as J. D. Salinger, Muhammad Ali, and the first green at Pebble Beach



What is your idea of perfect happiness?
I'm in the final foursome on Sunday, and on Monday morning I'm back in the chair at *Today*.

What is your current state of mind?
Overtaxed, driven, and very happy.

When and where were you happiest?
4:08 this morning, lying in bed . . . just before my alarm went off!

What is your favorite occupation?
Co-hosting *Today* is tough to beat!

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?
"To be very honest" and "yes." I have to learn to say both less.

What is your greatest fear?
That I won't make a difference or have an impact. That I'll be forgettable.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
I'm much too set in my ways.

What is the trait you most deplore in others?
Narrow-mindedness.

What is your greatest extravagance?
I own about 10 sets of golf clubs.

What is your favorite journey?
Down the first fairway.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?
Selflessness.

What is your greatest regret?
That I didn't spend more time talking to my grandparents. Not "visiting with" but "talking to" them. They could have taught me plenty!

What or who is the greatest love of your life?
I always say my six-year-old niece, Samantha. But there's someone making a strong run at second.

Which talent would you most like to have?
I'd love to be a great chef.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
I'd be more like the guy who wears the lampshade at the party, and less like the guy who makes sure the lampshade isn't crooked after the party.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
I'm right in the middle of it.

What is your most treasured possession?
My sanity.

Where would you like to live?
On a great trout stream in Montana. But the commute would be a bitch.

What is your most marked characteristic?
Decisiveness. No, wait, fairness . . . no, wait, kindness. O.K., hold on; let's go back to decisiveness.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
Holden Caulfield.

Who are your heroes in real life?
Muhammad Ali, my parents.

How would you like to die?
Bending over to tap in a birdie putt on the first green at Pebble Beach.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN DANELIAN

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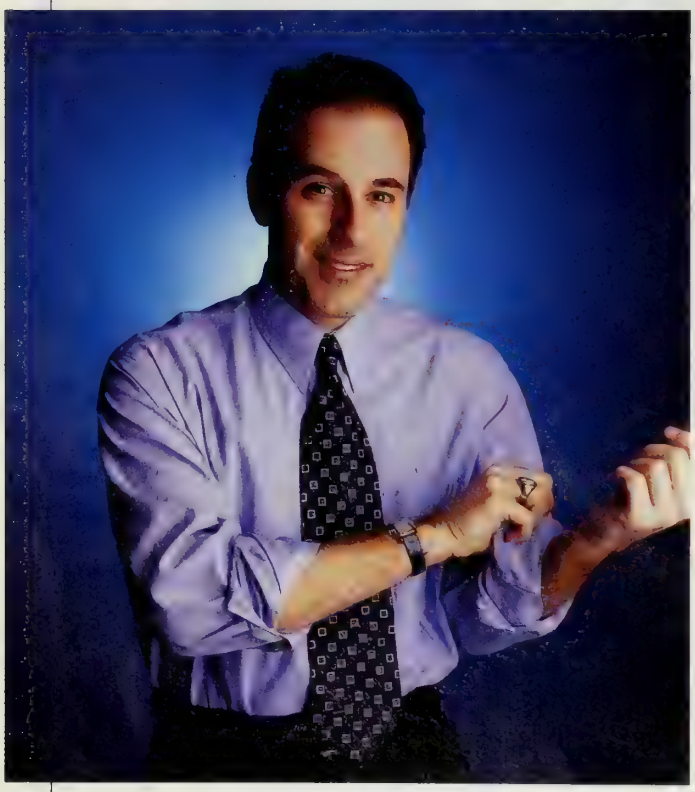
The hot new wave:
JOAQUIN PHOENIX,
VINCE VAUGHN, NATALIE PORTMAN,


THE BIG PORTFOLIO
STARS, LEGENDS AND FILMMAKERS
67
INCLUDING:
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MATT DAMON,
PAUL NEWMAN,
ROBERT DUVALL,
JACK NICHOLSON,
HELEN HUNT, JOAN ALLEN,
THE FONDAS AND MORE
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BRUCE WEBER
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WHEN LI
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OF CLEOPATRA,
THE MOST EX
MOVIE EVER
BY DAVID KA



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Bending over to tap in a birdie putt on the first green at Pebble Beach.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN DANELIAN

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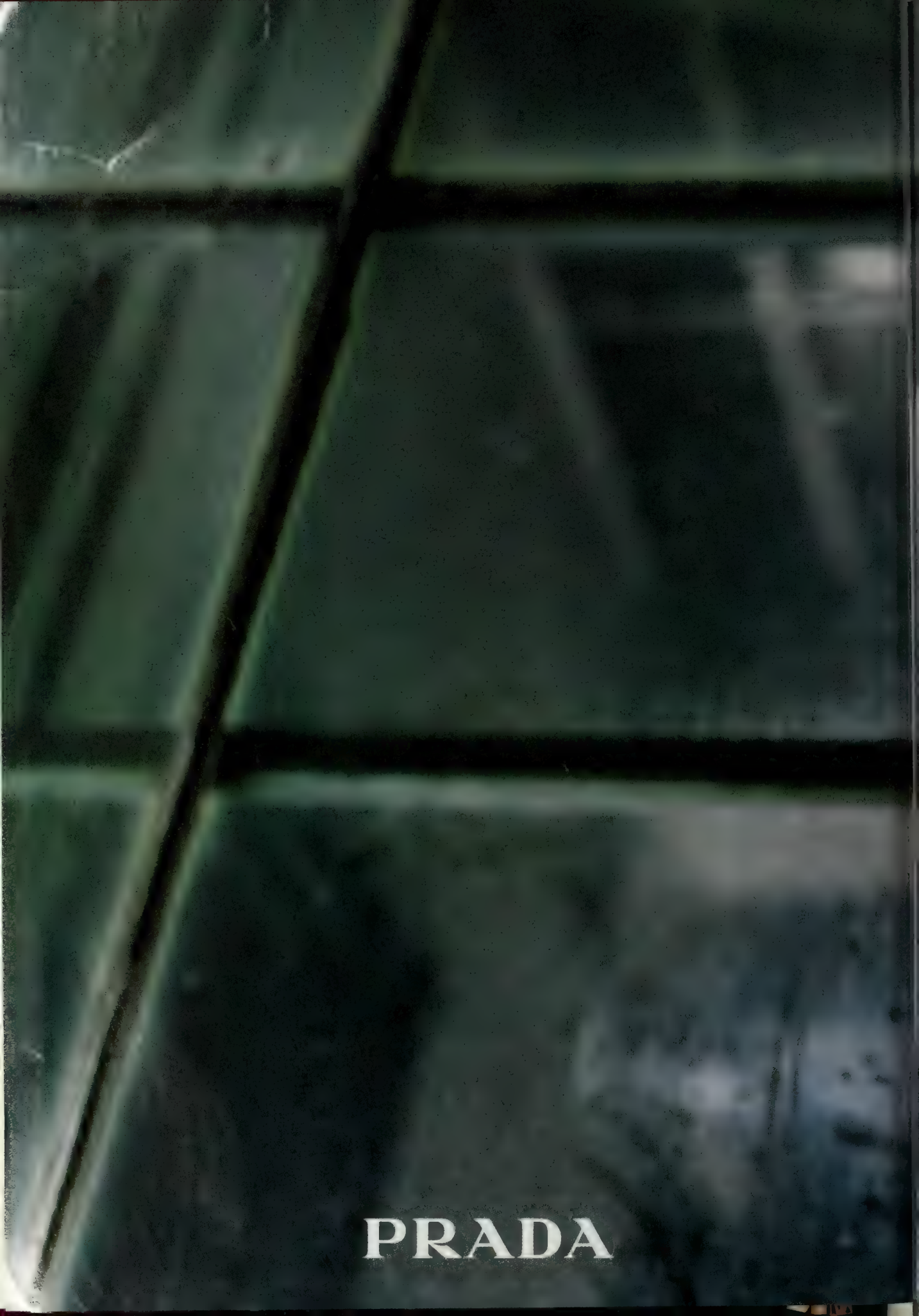
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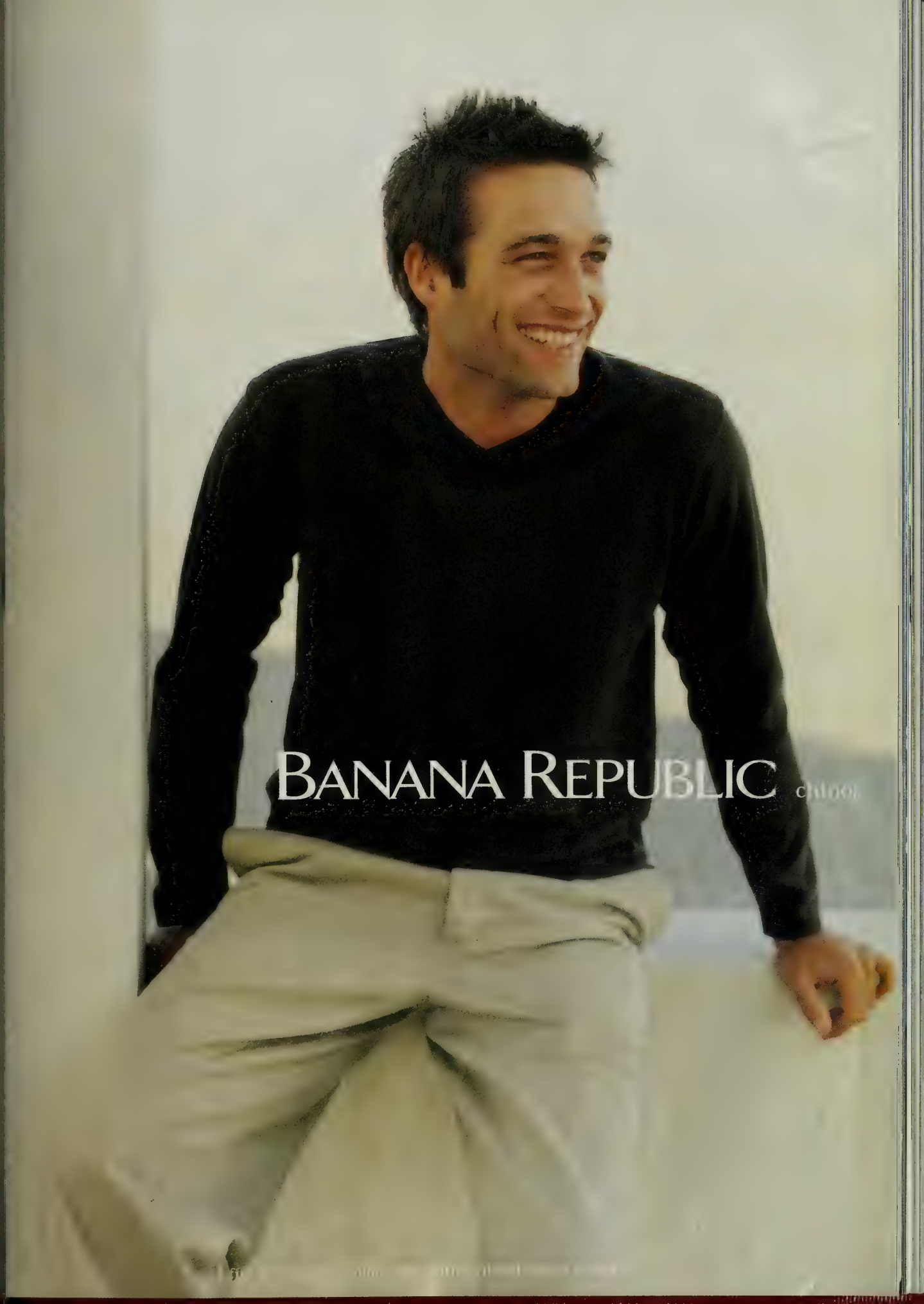


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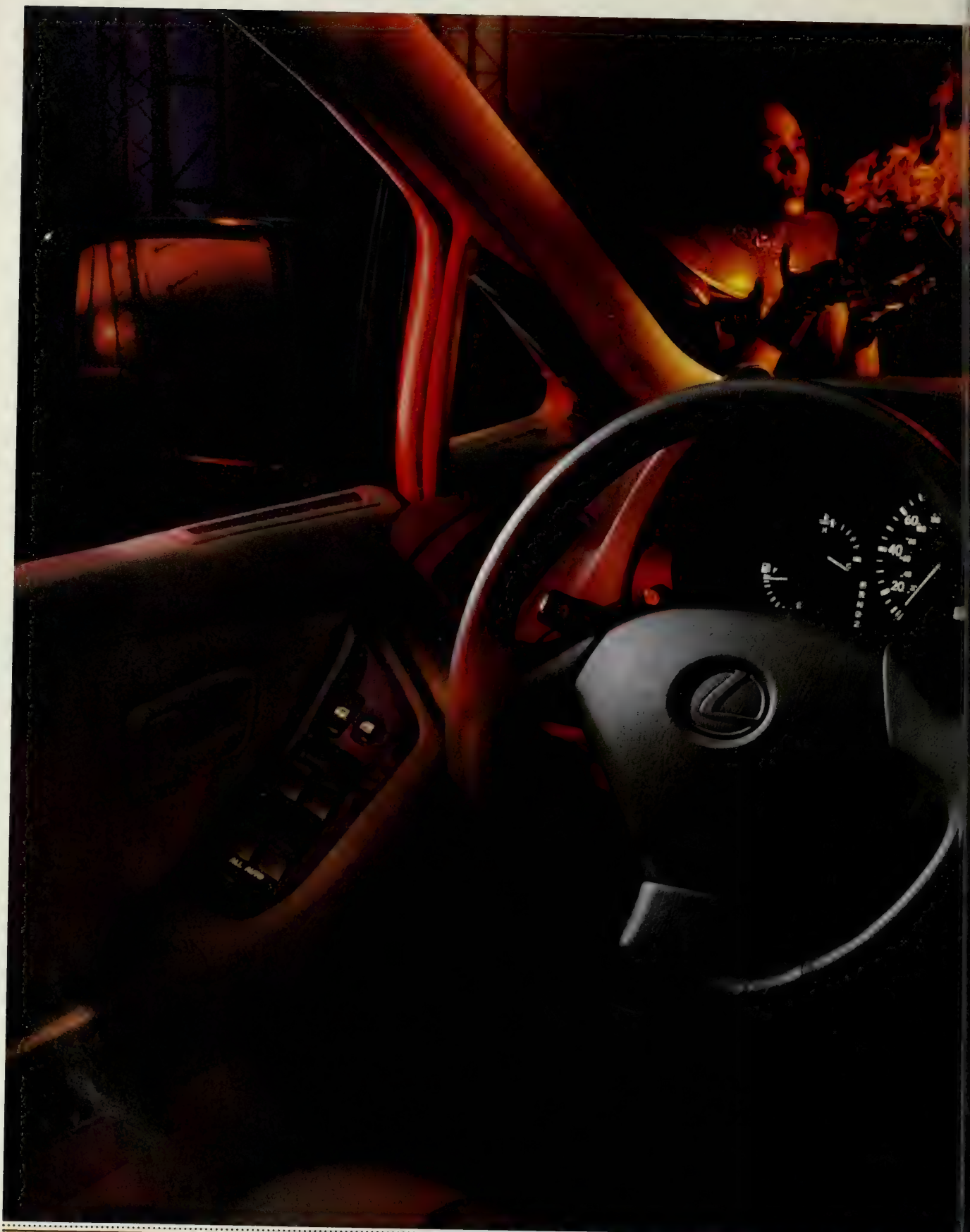
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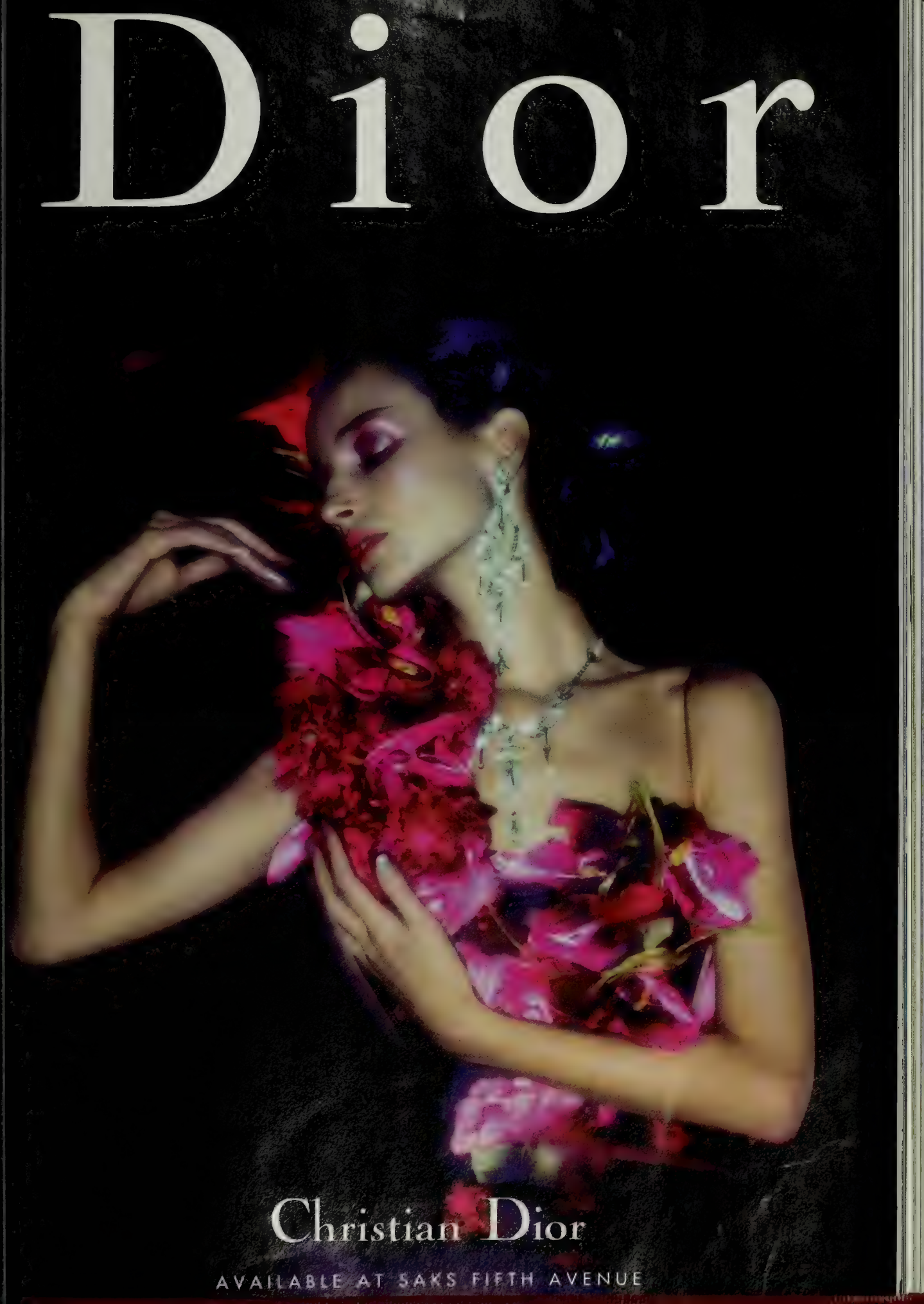
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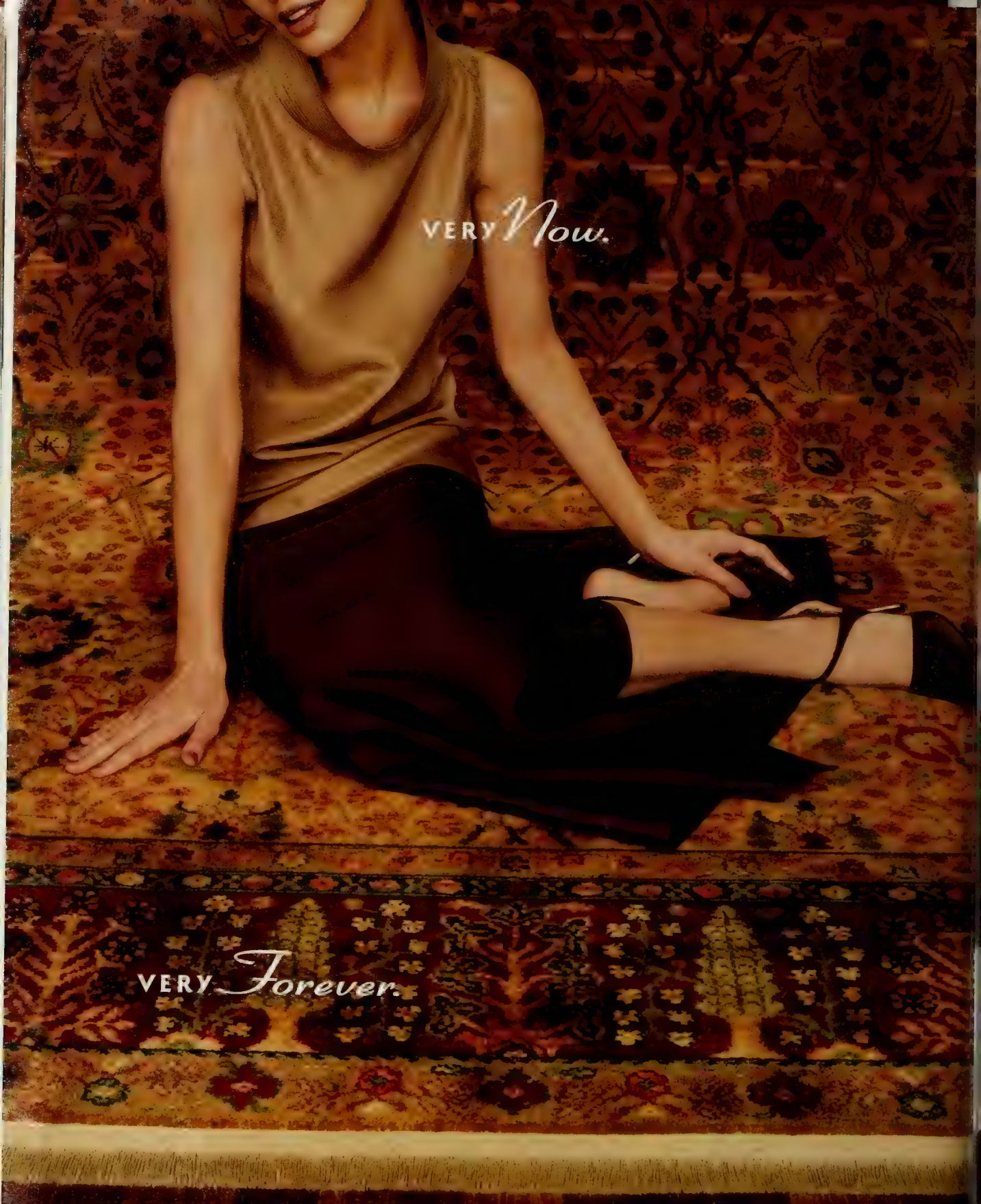
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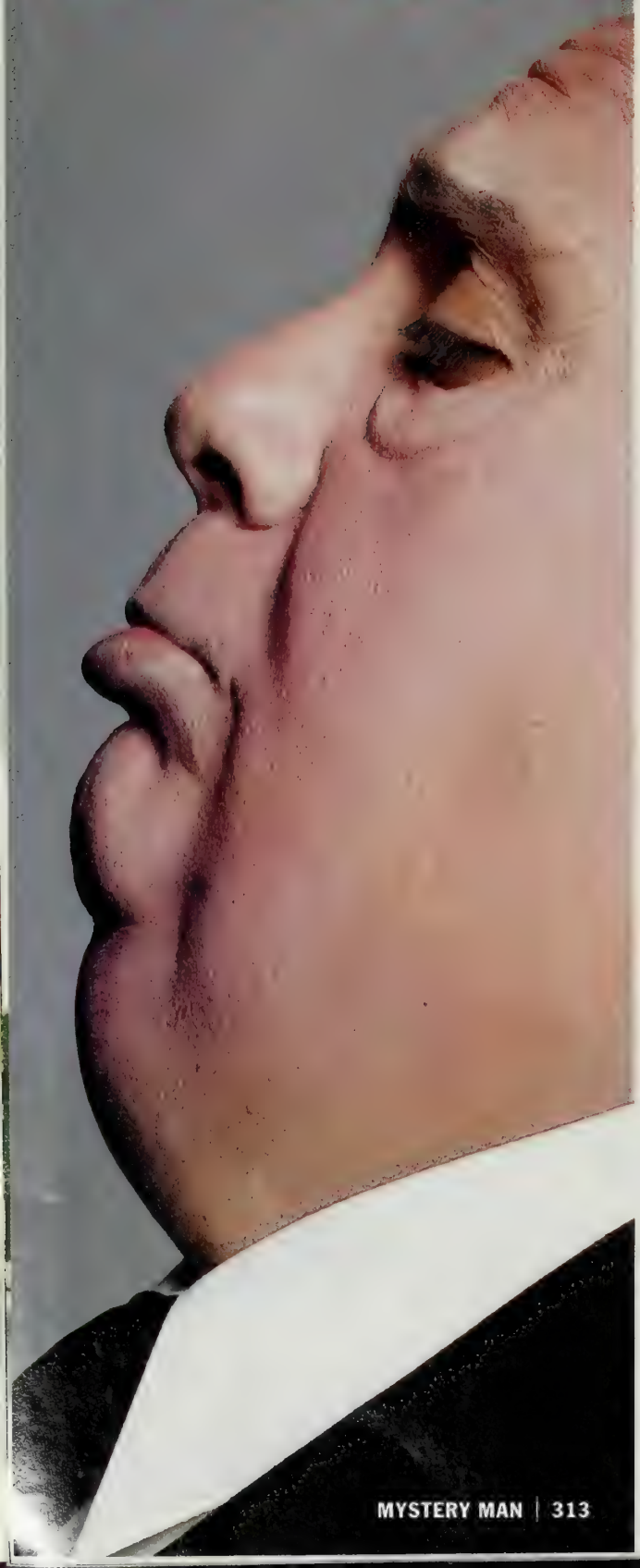
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VANITY FAIR

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Features

THE PORTFOLIO: HOLLYWOOD 1998 | 313

Jack Nicholson, Kim Basinger, Paul Newman, Chris Rock, Kate Winslet, Matt Damon, Danny DeVito—the stars all shine in a 45-page gallery of glamour by Annie Leibovitz, Helmut Newton, Bruce Weber, Herb Ritts, Snowdon, and others. James Wolcott frames their sparkle.

THE LAST GODDESS | 358

After winning best-actress Oscars in 1936 and 1937, Luise Rainer went head-to-head with MGM boss Louis B. Mayer, stifling her career. As Rainer returns to the screen, Marie Brenner gets the exclusive story of a fiery talent's split from Hollywood, and her tragic marriage to playwright Clifford Odets. Photographs by Annie Leibovitz.

HOCKNEY'S HOUNDS | 364

Ingrid Sischy spotlights Stanley and Boodgie, the four-legged stars of *David Hockney's Dog Days,* the painter's new book.

WHEN LIZ MET DICK | 366

Two casts, two Fox regimes, and $44 million made the 1963 spectacle *Cleopatra* the most expensive movie ever. It was also the most scandalous, David Kamp recounts, thanks to the romance between its young, married co-stars, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton.

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LIVE FAST, DIE YOUNG, AND LEAVE A BIG STAIN | 148

A recipe of drugs, shoot-outs, botched kidnappings, and greasy appetites spawned a film genre for the 90s, epitomized by *Pulp Fiction.* James Wolcott watches it choking on its own gore.

AGING BULLS | 160

The teen hit *Scream 2* outperformed movies starring Travolta, Hoffman, and Costner, Kim Masters writes, giving baby-boomer studio executives some new gray hairs.

WHAT LULU WANTED | 174

When silent-screen star Louise Brooks made a pair of sexually charged movies in 1920s Berlin, she became a Hollywood outcast and an intellectual icon. Five decades later, Tom Dardis got her talking about Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin, and sex.

THAT OLD STAR MAGIC | 188

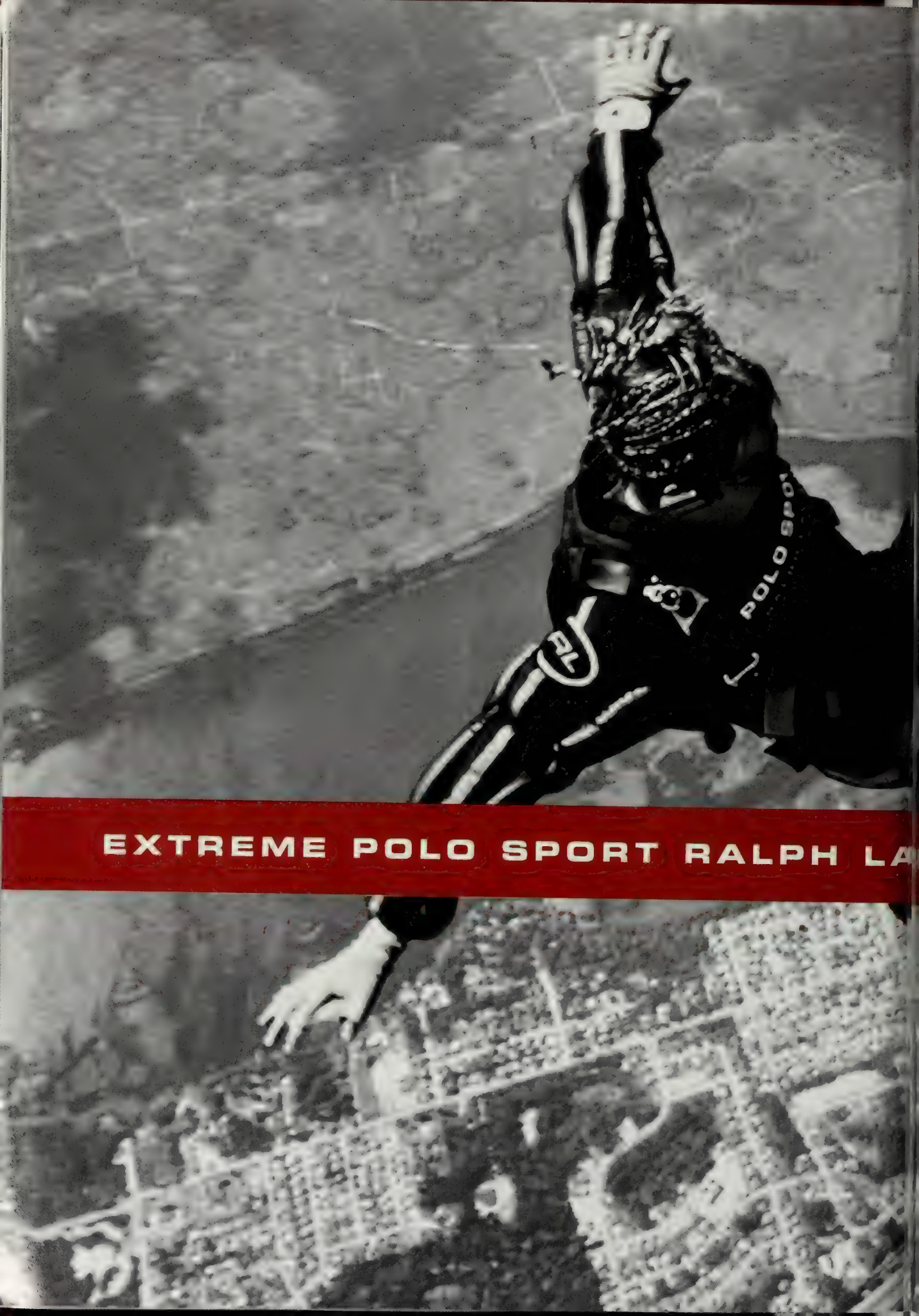
Patricia Bosworth enters the memorabilia-packed world of Larry Quirk, living homage to his uncle James, the powerful editor of *Photoplay,* and to the era before celebrity lost its mystery.

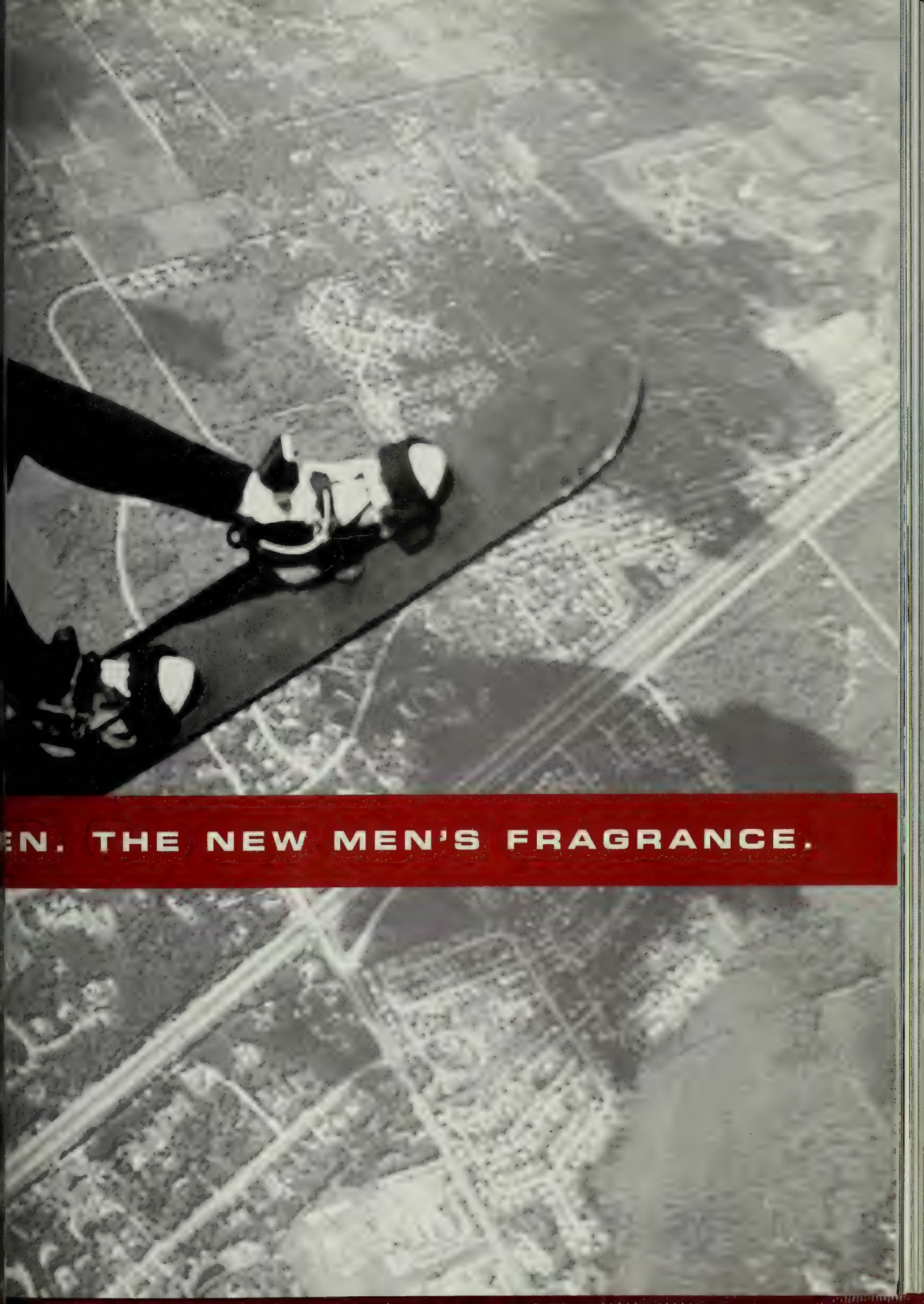
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Bob Colacello and Roxanne Lowit assess this summer's Miramax release *54,* featuring the disco that defined decadence.

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In the 40s and 50s, the stellar sorority made more than 250 movies. Now six of them reunite for Sam Jones and Peter Harry Brown.

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Lauded for her Oscar-winning documentaries of blue-collar America, Barbara Kopple has turned her camera on Woody Allen. Leslie Bennetts reports.

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Kevin Sessums nominates Bette Midler for her divinity, wit, and that highway-adoption thing that once seemed so nutty. Illustration by Robert Risko.

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From *The Godfather* to *American Graffiti* to *Mean Streets,* the seminal films of the 70s emerged from the cultural chaos of the era. In an excerpt from his new book, Peter Biskind relives the struggle of a band of impassioned young directors to create a brave new cinema.

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As Hollywood anoints G its favorite rating, Laura Jacobs and Pascal Chevallier spotlight the most anticipated childhood-book-to-movie yet, *Madeline.*

LIFE BEGINS AT 8:30 | 260

In the 40s and 50s, Ciro's was packed with the most famous faces—Marilyn Monroe, Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland, and Sammy Davis Jr. Sheila Weller, the owner's niece, reveals the nightclub's secrets.

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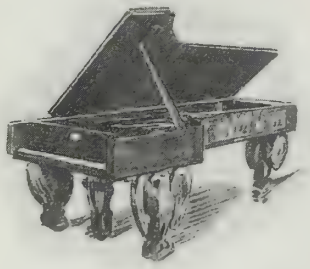
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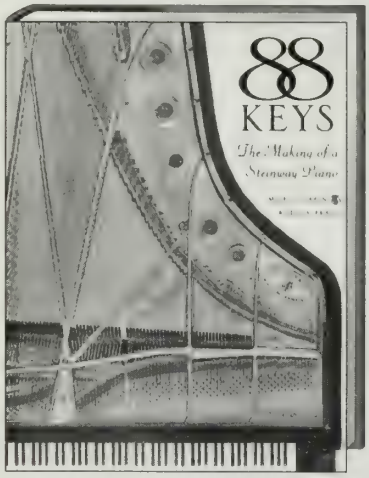


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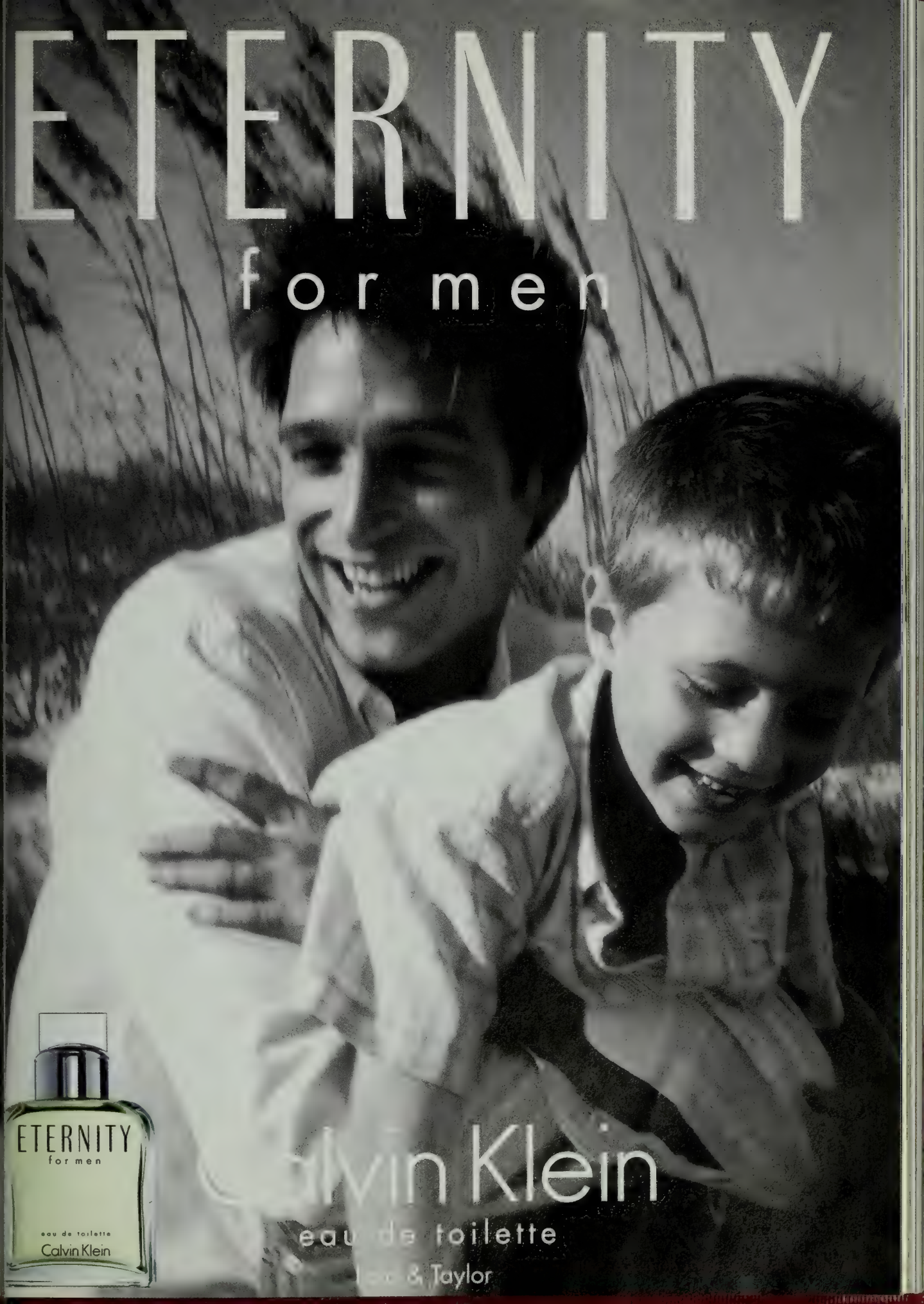
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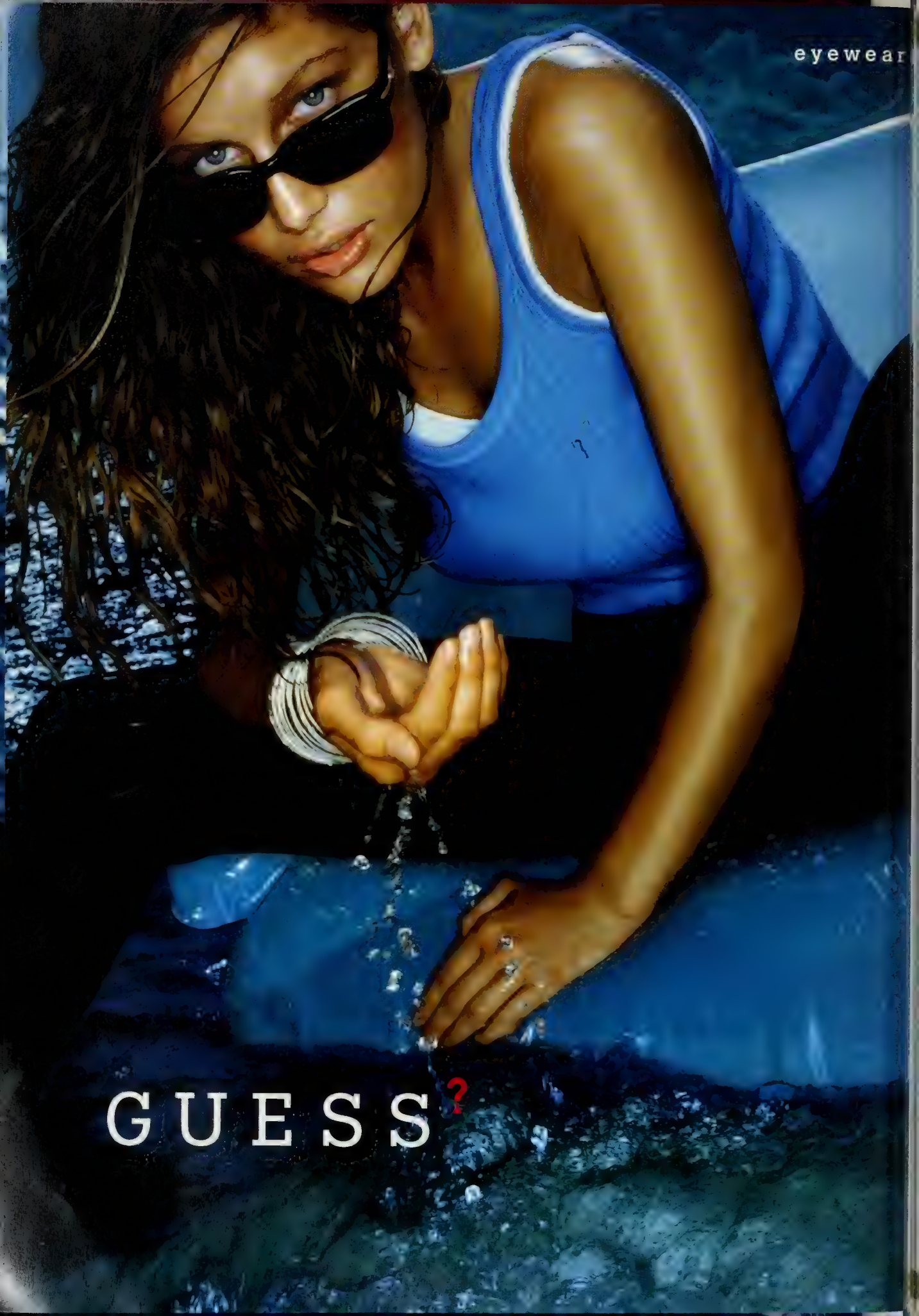
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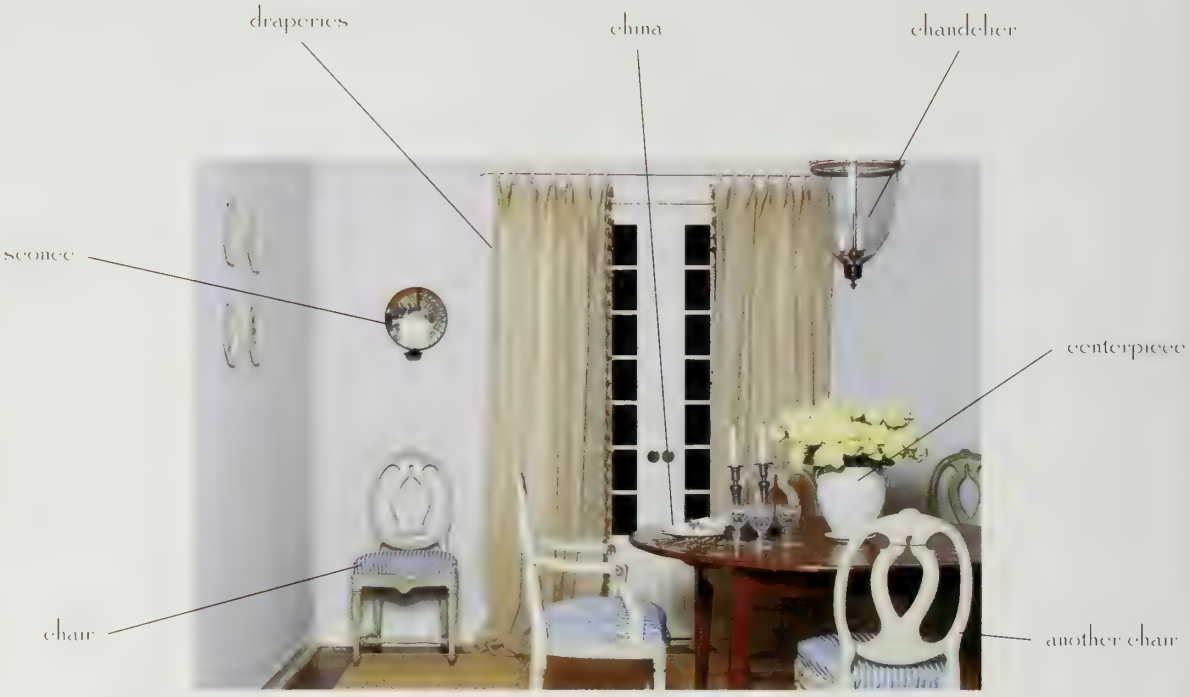

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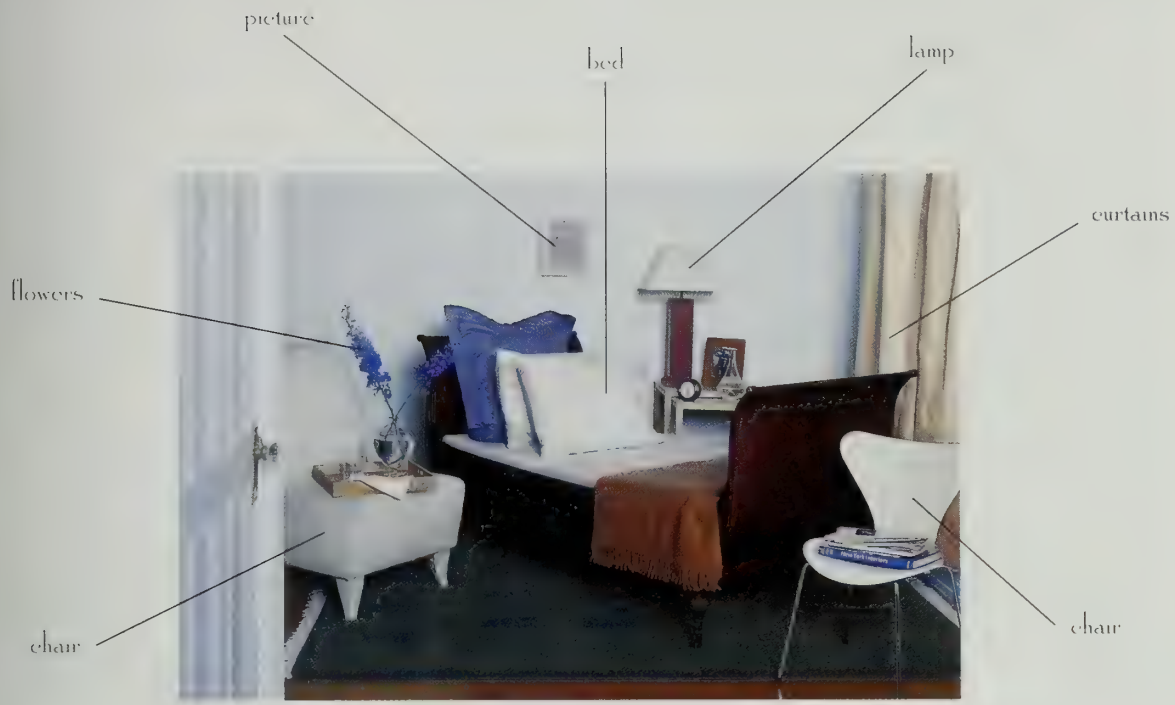
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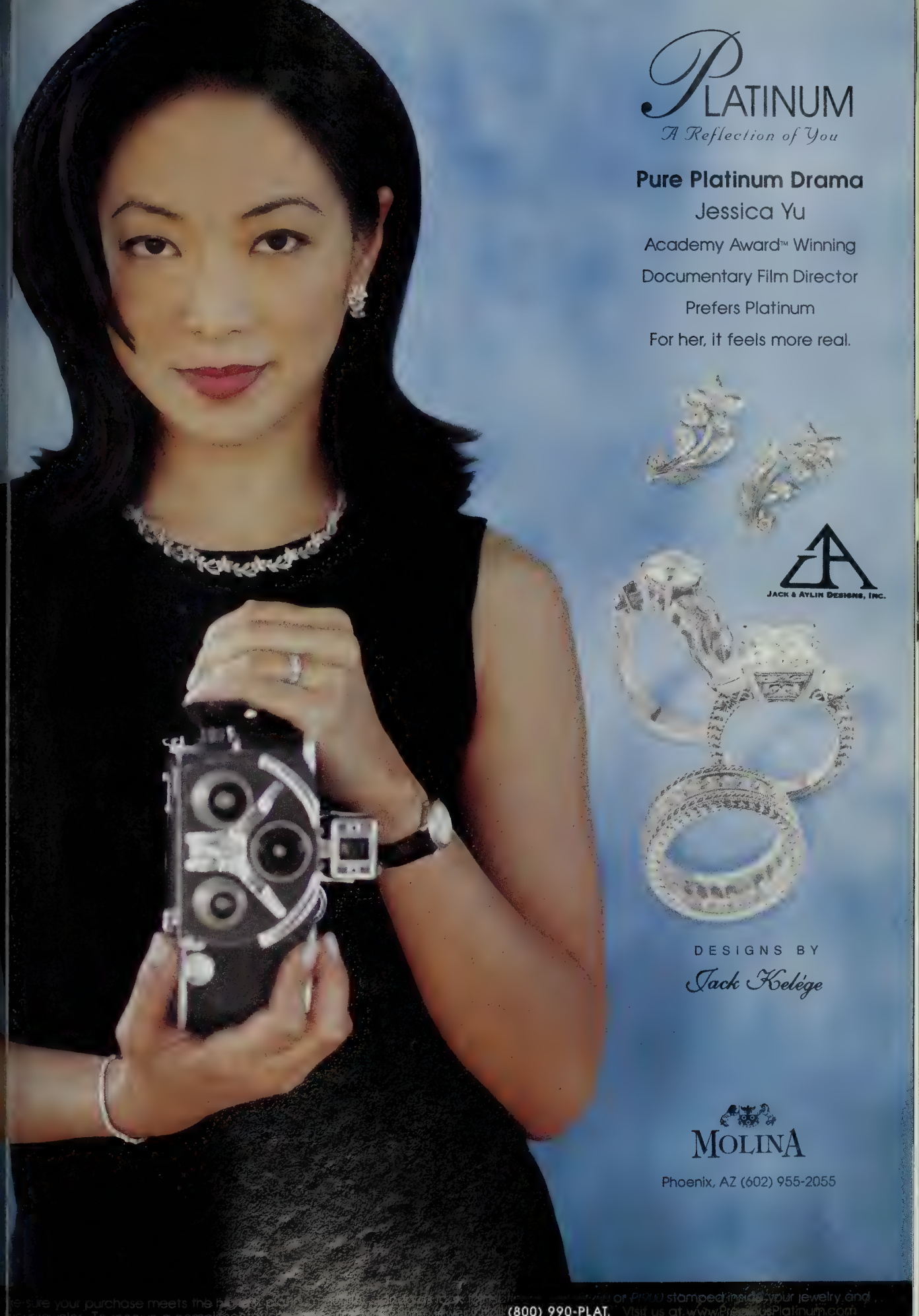
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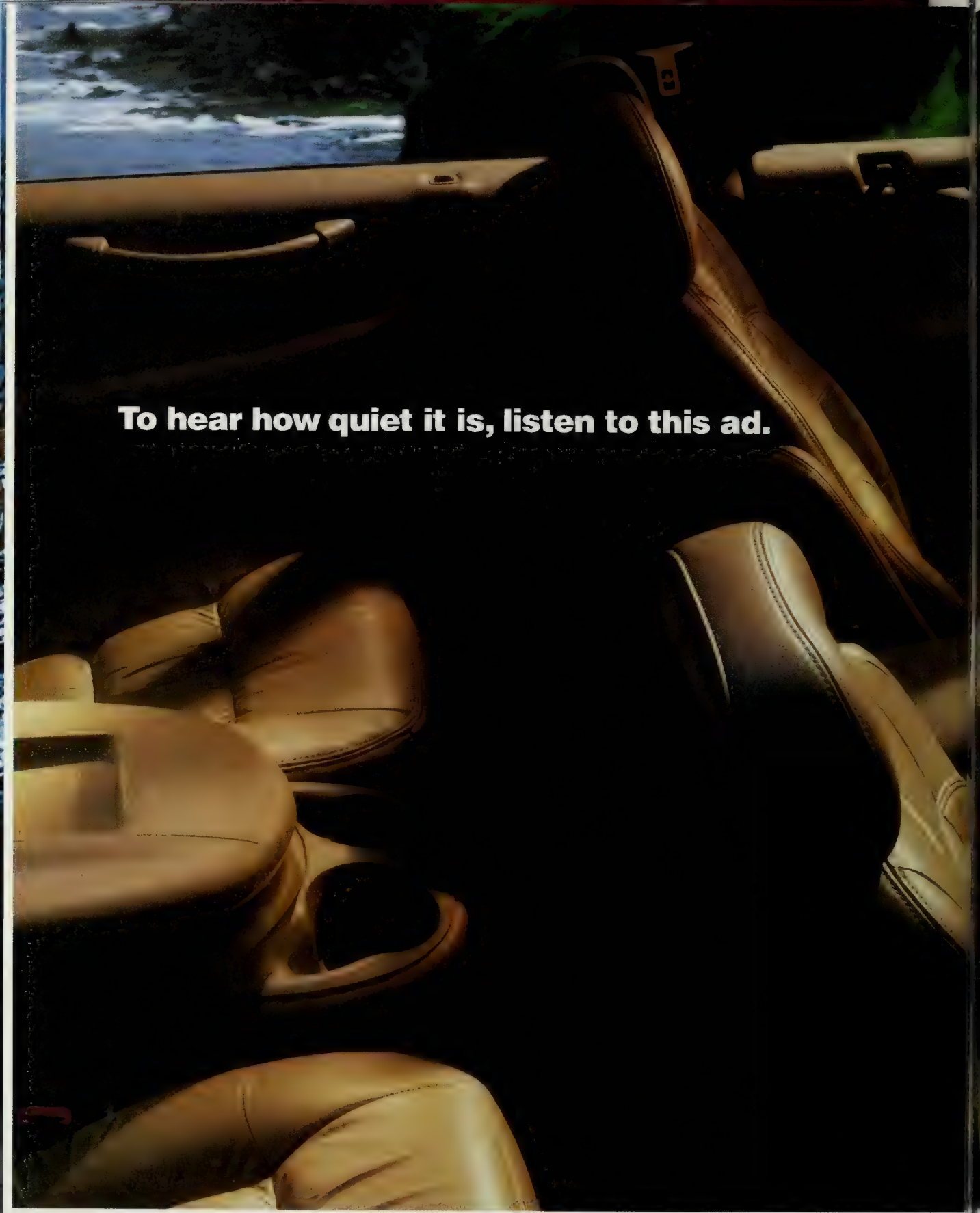




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Editor's Letter

Studio Systems



Before it thundered out of dry dock last December to fabulous reviews, 14 Academy Award nominations, and possession of Hollywood's Blue Ribband as the highest-grossing movie ever, *Titanic* seemed doomed to be remembered less for its merits than for director James Cameron's Queeg-ish reign of terror, the missed deadlines, the Defense Department–size cost overruns. For those old enough to remember, the nightmare sent them back almost 40 years, to the making of another monumentally costly costume epic: *Cleopatra.*

As contributor David Kamp points out in "When Liz Met Dick," on page 366, *Cleopatra* dwarfs *Titanic* in terms of backstage horrors. *Cleopatra* went through two entire sets, two casts, two directors, and two Twentieth Century Fox studio regimes. *Titanic* took 164 days to film. *Cleopatra*'s production, which spread over four countries, took more than 600 days. The film's fiscal excesses, which included $80,000 spent on bottled water and $12,000 to remove cats from the set, drove the budget upward to $44 million—an amount equal to $300 million in today's dollars.

Like *Titanic, Cleopatra* featured two hot young stars—Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. Both, however, were married to other people at the time, and their public affair and absurdly bad behavior during the making of the movie—boozy tantrums, humiliated spouses, scuffles with paparazzi—set the standard for today's celebrity miscreants.

Cleopatra was finished in 1962, shortly after the death of another Hollywood production: Ciro's, the legendary Sunset Strip nightclub owned by Herman Hover, whose niece Sheila Weller recalls the club's toddling glamour in "Life Begins at 8:30," on page 260. Weller evokes the nightly scene, from Walter Winchell and Marilyn Monroe's regular table to the tiny dance floor which allowed customers to "bump posteriors" with Rock H son and Ava Gardner.

In the 70s, the club of the moment was Stu 54, which impresarios Steve Rubell and Schrager had fashioned out of an old CBS tel sion studio, a few hundred yards of velvet ro and an army of young male bartenders wear nothing but shorts. Director Mark Christophe re-creating those glory days in the film *54.* A Studio 54 regulars Bob Colacello and Roxa Lowit, whose paparazzi shots of the original c were used by Christopher as research, return their old haunt for the film spotlight on page 200.

Just as Studio 54 was hitting its stride, Hollywood was experie ing a creative rebirth, led by an exciting "new wave" of young di tors. Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola, Steven Spielb George Lucas, William Friedkin, and Peter Bogdanovich were just bright young *auteurs.* As Peter Biskind explains in his new bo *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls,* an excerpt of which appears on page 2 they effectively saved Hollywood from itself—from making big, le en costume dramas, like, well, *Cleopatra.*

Now, two decades later, a new generation of smart young rectors is making its mark in Hollywood. And 23 of them app in Annie Leibovitz's group portrait beginning on page 326—fr Atom Egoyan (*The Sweet Hereafter*) to Bryan Singer (*The Us Suspects*) to Kasi Lemmons (*Eve's Bayou*). There's even a cert traditionalist feel here. *She's So Lovely,* the latest film by on Hollywood's most promising new directors, Nick Cassave was written 30 years ago by his late father, director and a John Cassavetes.

Graydon Carter

Smoke Screen



BIG JACK
Jack Nicholson, photographed at his home in Los Angeles on January 22, 1998. A billboard featuring this image went up on Sunset Boulevard on March 2. Sweater by Barneys New York Collection. Grooming by Tracy Moyer. Styled by Kim Meehan. Photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Annie Leibovitz.


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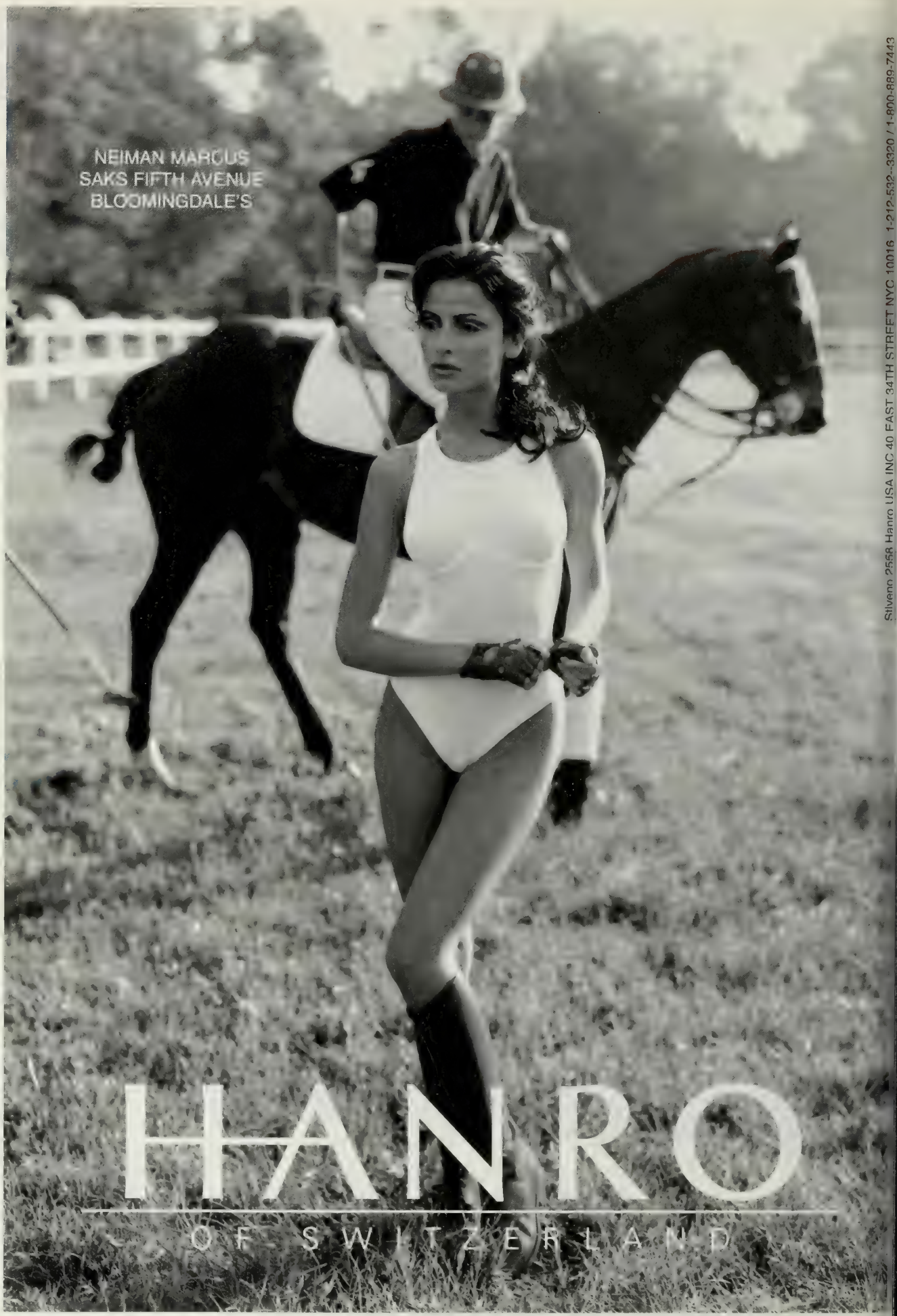


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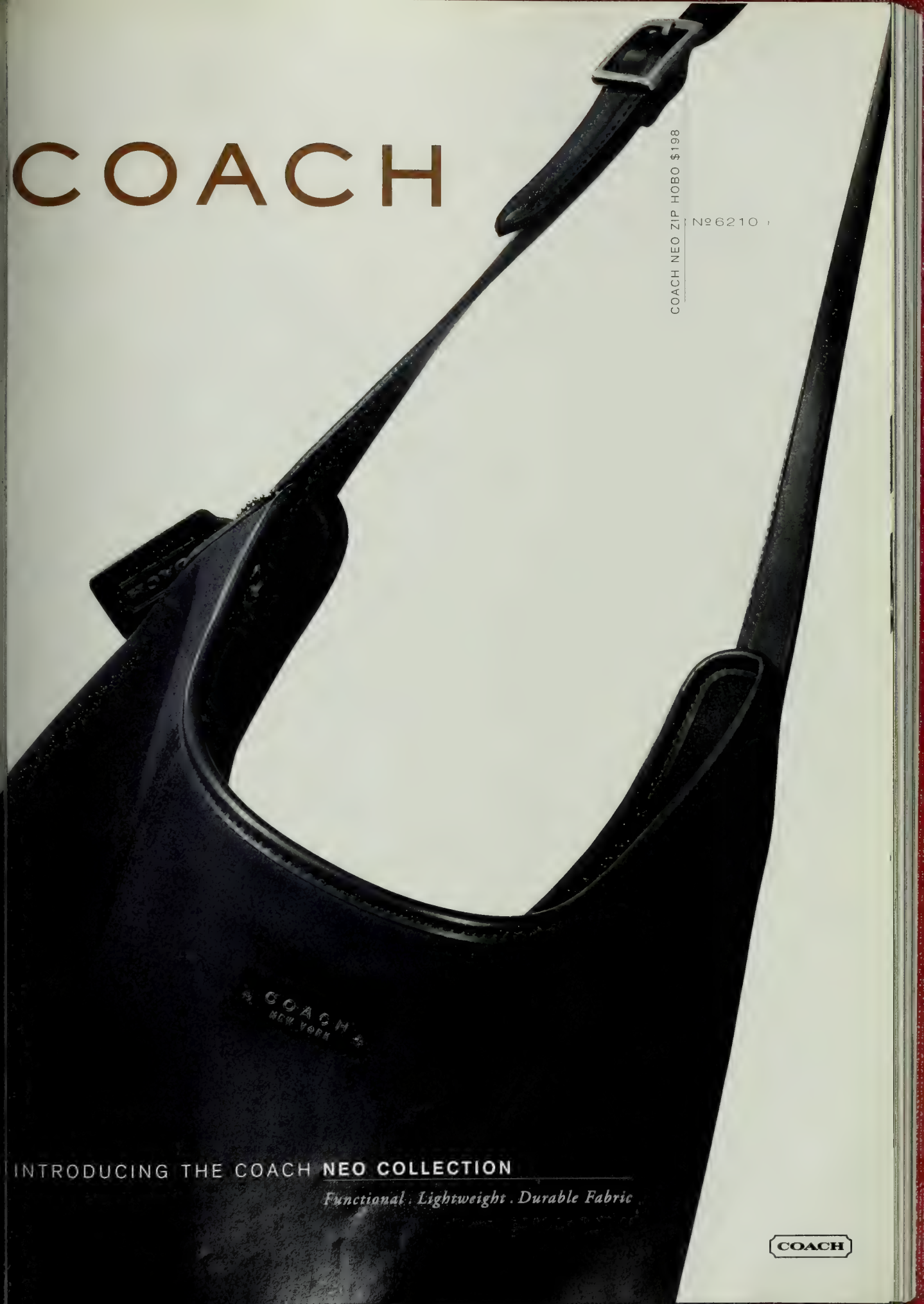
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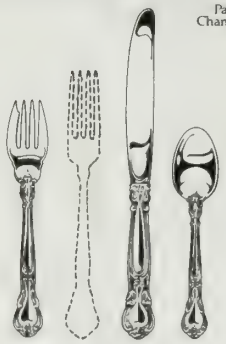
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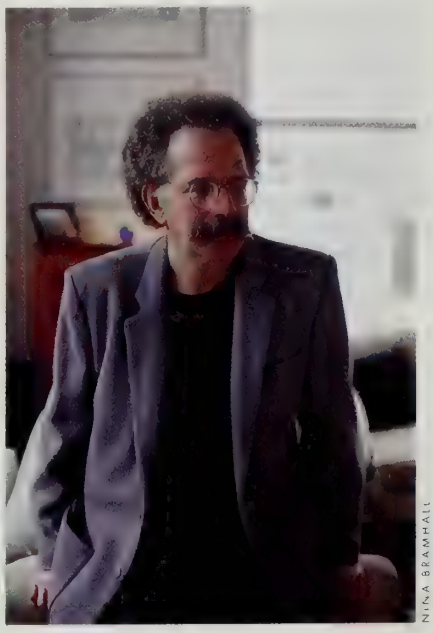
Contributors



When writer-at-large **Marie Brenner** first saw Luise Rainer in *The Good Earth,* in 1972, she was overwhelmed by the actress's haunting quality. The time Bre spent in London with Rainer for this month's profile only enhanced her fascination. "When Rainer opened the door of her flat for me," says Bre "I felt as if I was an audience at a remarkable one-woman show." The film adaptation of Brenner's 1996 *V.F.* article on tobacco-company whistle-blowe Jeffrey Wigand is to star Russell Crowe and Al Pacino.

Peter Biskind spent five years researching and writing his book *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls,* which is excerpted on page 218. The greatest challenge, Biskind says, "was sifting through the stories, trying to figure out what's true and what isn't." Though he has always lived in New York, Biskind has never been far from Hollywood: he produced documentaries in the early 70s and later became the executive editor of *Premiere.* Biskind's book will be published this month by Simon & Schuster.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 90



NINA BRAMHALL



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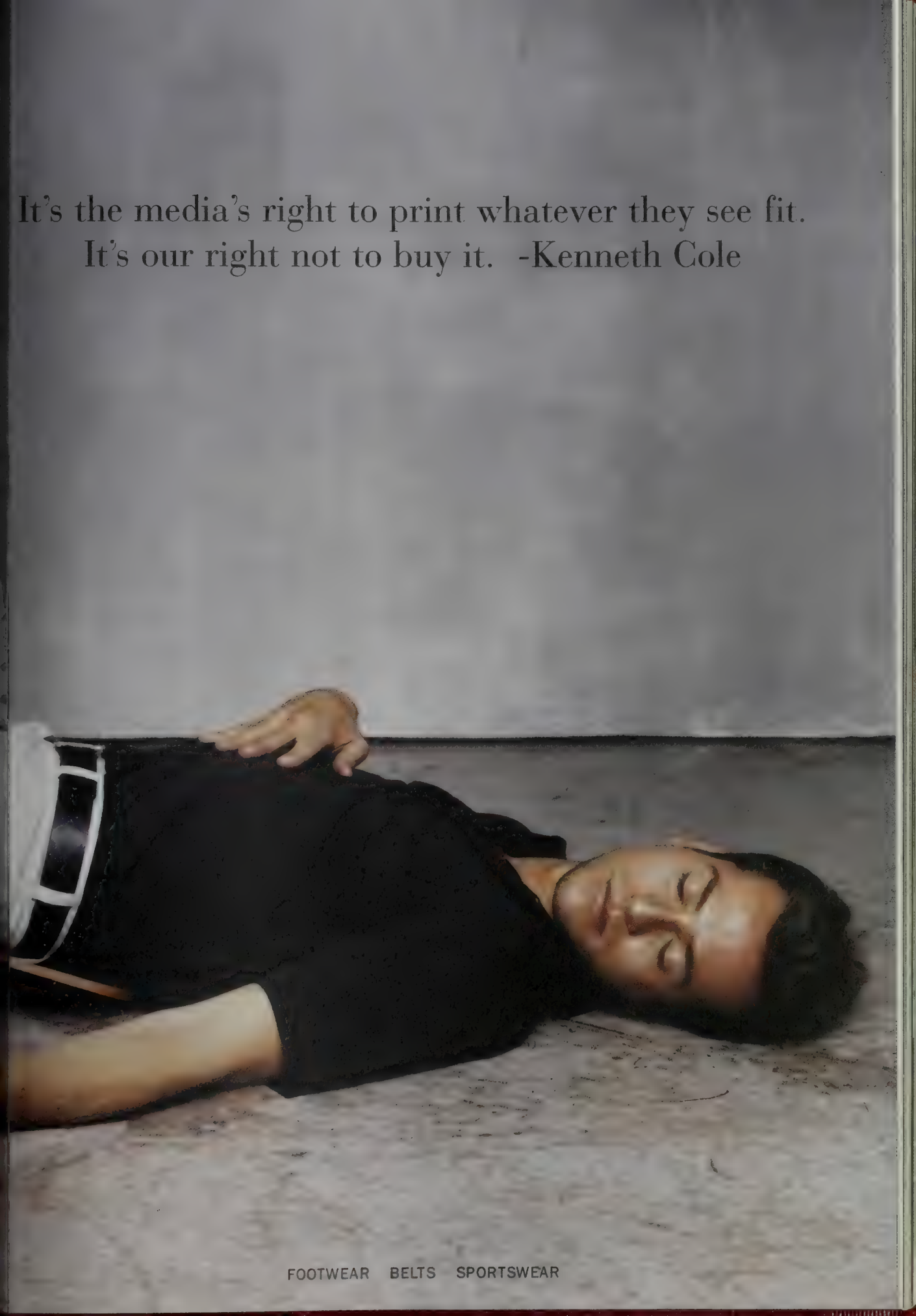
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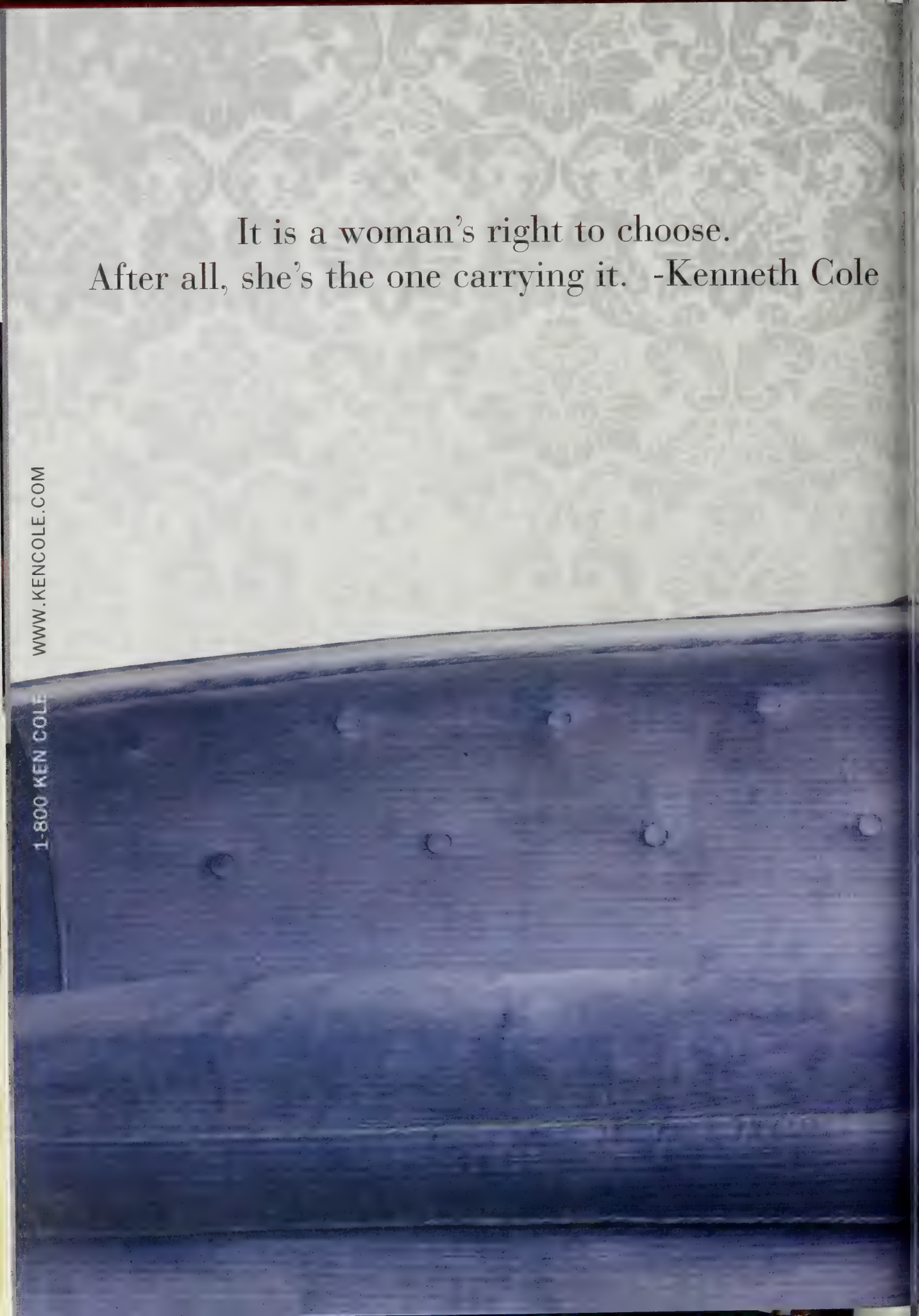

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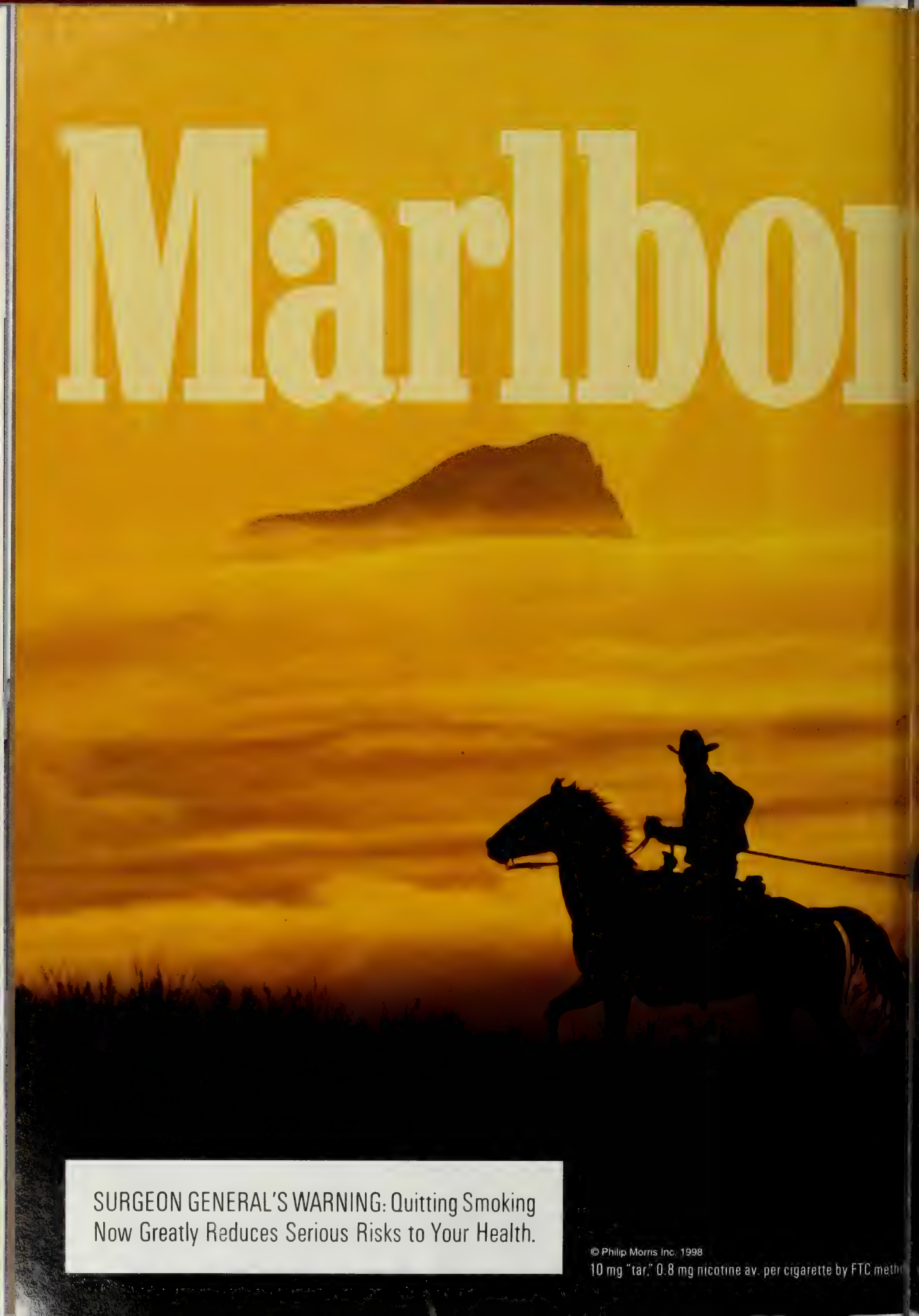
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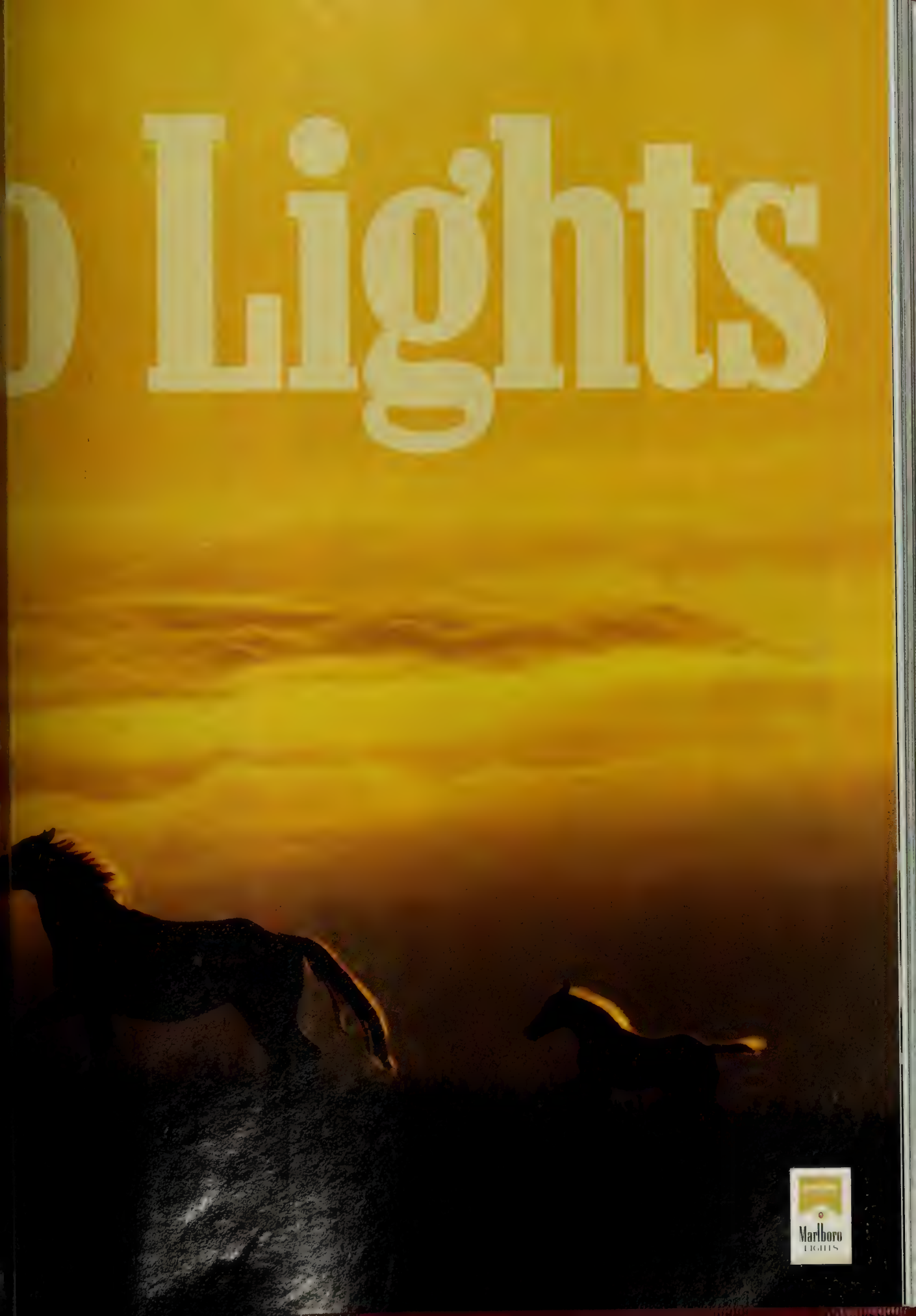
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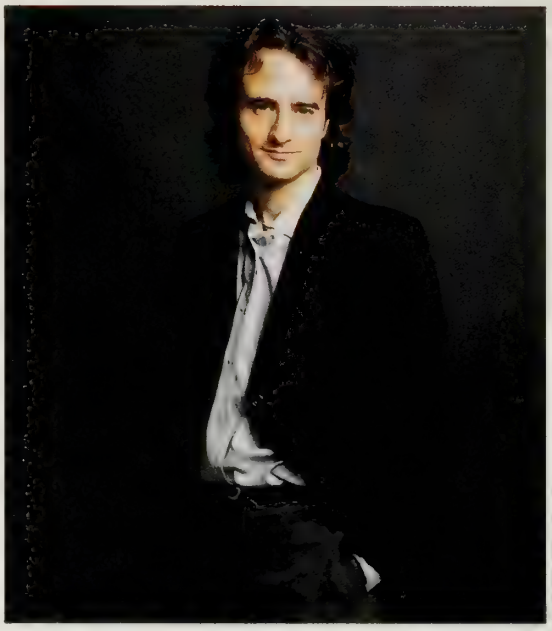
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 76



GASPER TRINGALE

"I've never gone for spectacle, so I was the last person inclined to like *Cleopatra,*" says contributing editor **David Kamp,** who on page 366 recalls the disastrous 1963 production. When Kamp first saw the film, he was struck primarily "by the costumes and Richard Burton's nostril-flaring." But Kamp's research revealed a fascinating mix of characters—from Elizabeth Taylor to director Joseph Mankiewicz, whom Kamp calls "an unheralded, great man."



BILL PHELPS

After she graduated from Berkeley, **Sheila Weller** moved to New York to study sociology at Columbia. Then she changed her mind. "It was *much* neater to be a waitress than a graduate student," Weller recalls. So she wrote a novel, *Hansel & Gretel in Beverly Hills,* and then four true-crime books. In this issue, Weller recalls Ciro's, the Hollywood hot spot of the 40s and 50s, which was owned by her uncle Herman Hover.



ERA AOSHIMA

Children's stories such as *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle* and *Harriet the Spy* were once the literature of choice for contributing editor **Laura Jacobs,** who on page 258 spotlights the film adaptation of *Madeline.* But Jacobs's youth wasn't exactly filled with books. "My parents didn't read to me," she says. It wasn't until after college that Jacobs decided to write for a living. "My generation wasn't pushed to read by the time we were three," she says. "I feel sorry for kids today."

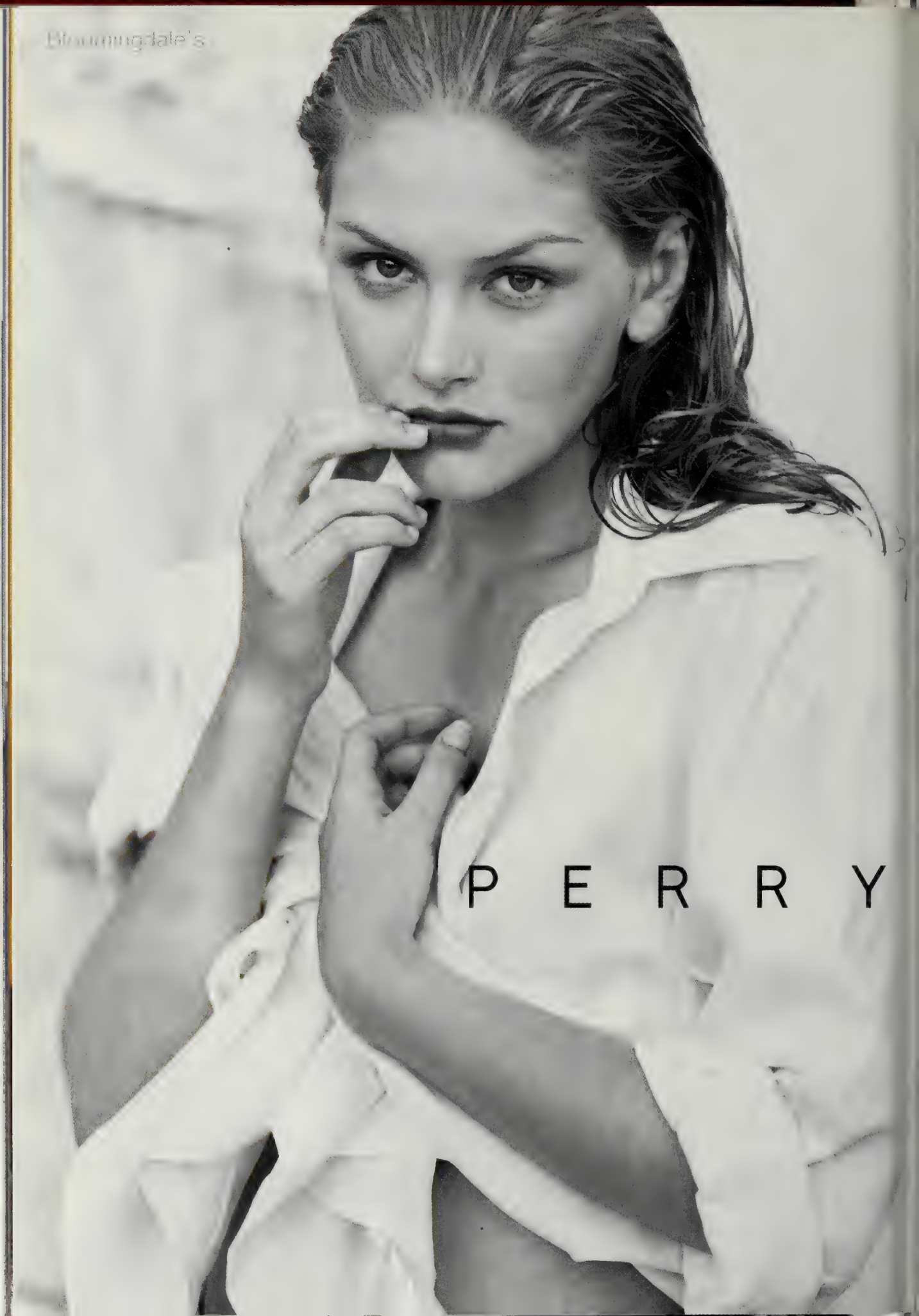
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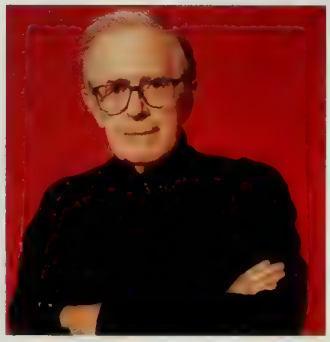
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 90



Contributing editor **Kim Masters** got a big break in 1987, while working for the Los Angeles *Daily News*. When Columbia Pictures chairman David Puttnam was fired, she got the first interview with him, scooping the bigger rivals such as *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. This month Masters offers more Hollywood scoop in "The Studios."



VINCENT PI ARDEL

In 1976, after 11 years as editor in chief of Berkley Books, **Tom Dardis** started writing. Since then he has published five books, including *Some Time in the Sun*. While researching a biography of Buster Keaton in 1977, Dardis met actress Louise Brooks, whom he recalls in this issue. At one point during their correspondence, Brooks wrote to Dardis, "I'll be a sonofabitch if I don't tell you more than *anybody*."

After her four-year stint playing Mary in the 1965 Broadway production of Jean Kerr's *Mary, Mary*, **Patricia Bosworth** became a writer. "It was the only job I could get after being an actress," says Bosworth, who spent a year and a half writing for Larry Quirk's Hollywood fan magazines, an experience she recalls in this month's issue. "Mario Puzo, Bruce Jay Friedman—a lot of writers began in this area: schlock."



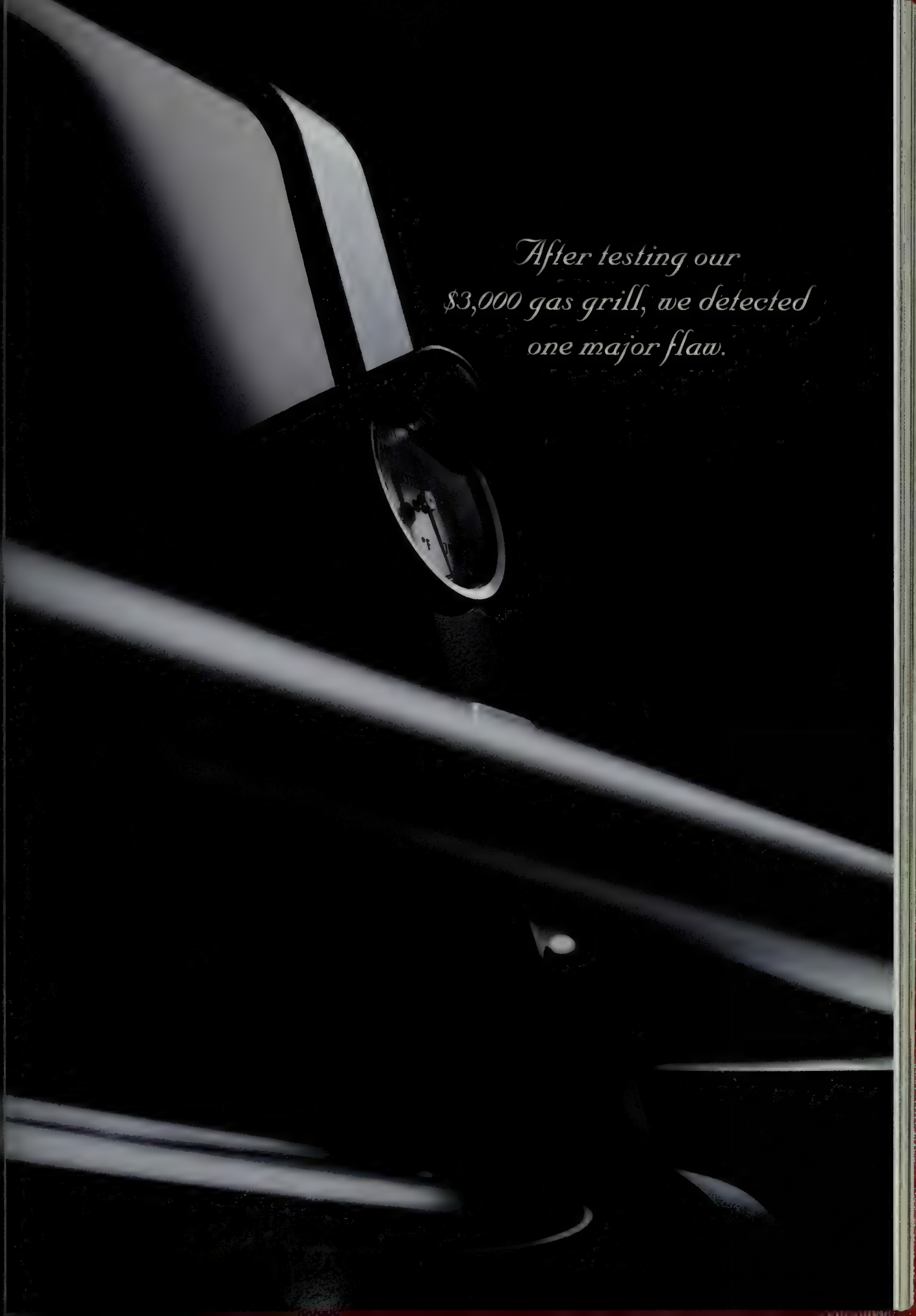
FRANCESCO SCAVULLO



GASPER TRINGALE

Contributing editor **James Wolcott**, who calls 1997 "a pretty good year in movies," assesses the death of the "scuzz film" genre on page 148 and writes the captions in the Hollywood portfolio, which begins on page 313. "The most difficult captions to do are the ones where there's so much to say about a performance," says Wolcott, who also writes movie reviews for *The Wall Street Journal*. "I enjoyed doing the more offbeat ones."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 104


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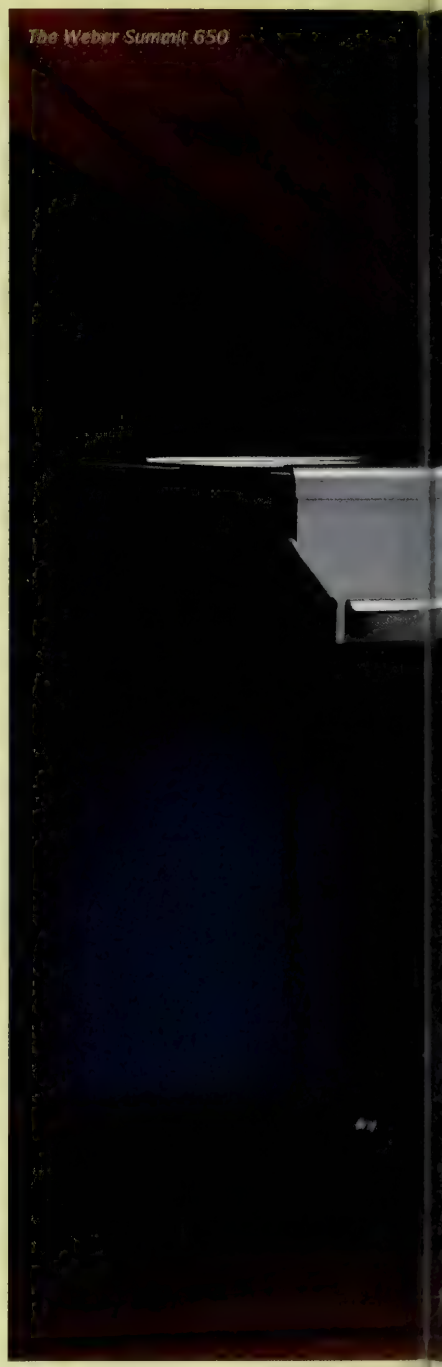
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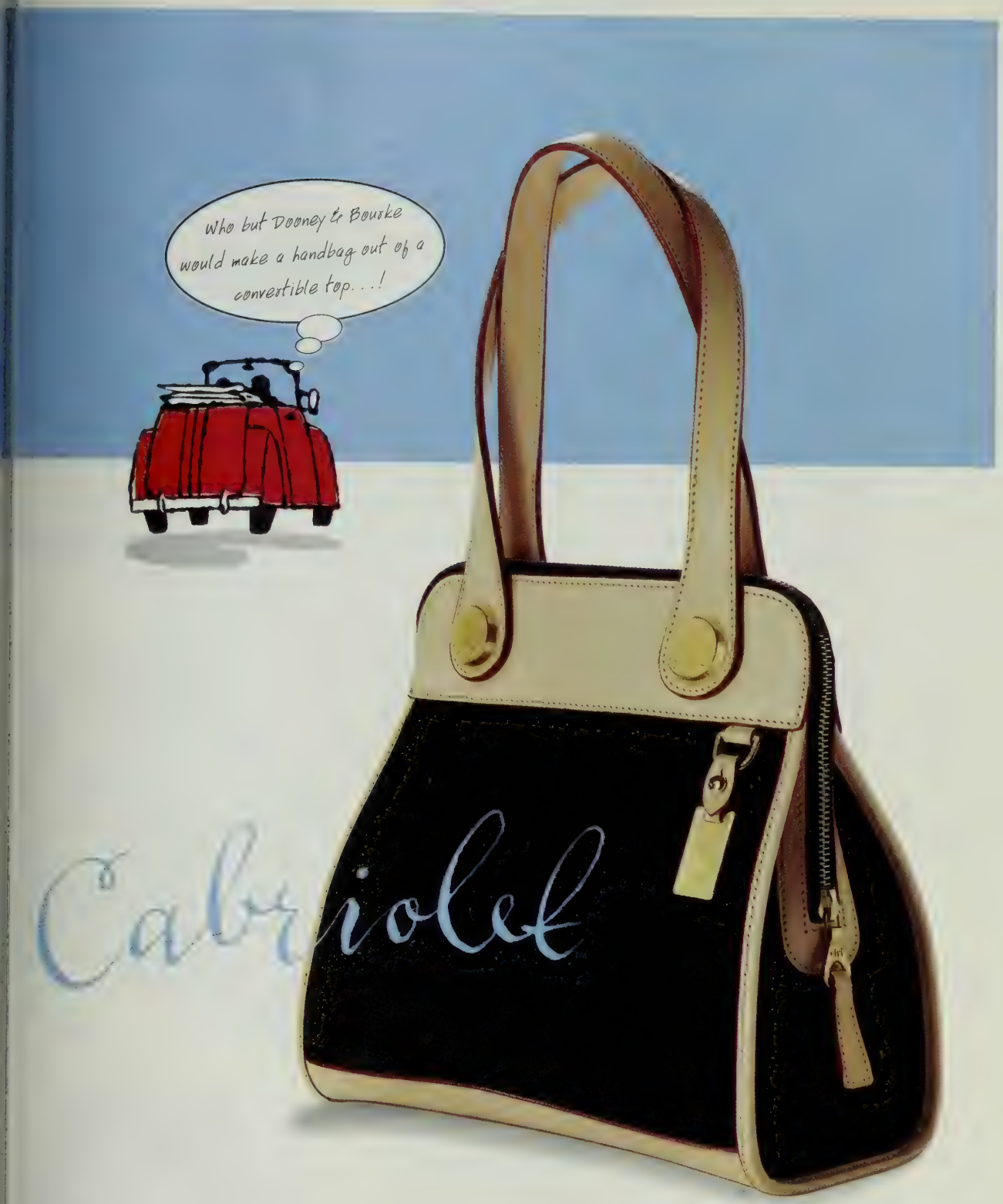
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Contributors

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 94



"My life is consumed by drawing," says illustrator **Barry Blitt,** who began drawing as a kid—doing "funny pictures of the teacher." When he's not actually putting pen to paper, Blitt reads newspapers, watches television, and generally stays informed about other people's foibles. Lately, while watching TV with his 20-month-old son, Samuel, Blitt has found some new targets. "I've been drawing Marilyn Manson a lot lately," says Blitt, who on page 310 lampoons the White House sex scandal. "And when I need a quick joke in one of my drawings, I just stick in Kathy Lee Gifford."

ILLUSTRATION OF BARRY BLITT BY ROBERT RISKO



"What's great about L.A.," says contributing artist **Robert Risko,** "is that celebrities live out their fantasies in a more cartoonlike way." The New Yorker recently visited Los Angeles—facets of which he's illustrated for this month's column on the Hollywood studios—as part of a four-city tour in conjunction with ads he draws for Lexus. But Risko is used to fantastical people. Andy Warhol featured his work in *Interview* magazine, where Risko drew his breakthrough 1984 cover of Dolly Parton.

ILLUSTRATION OF ROBERT RISKO BY TIM SHEAFFER



On page 298, **Tim Sheaffer** assesses Hollywood's most sought-after finishing school: the mailroom of the William Morris Agency. Sheaffer admits that his own start was similar, if a little less glamorous. "I was a layout artist at Lord & Taylor," he recalls. "It was on-the-job training. But I got in trouble for drawing caricatures of people. I guess they weren't very flattering."

ILLUSTRATION OF TIM SHEAFFER BY BARRY BLITT



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"It's all about the experience," **Natalie Portman** says of her flourishing career. "The people I get to work with, the friends you make." Since her feature debut, as the waifish heroine in *The Professional,* Portman, 16, has become one of the most accomplished young actors of her generation. "My training has all been watching other people," she says, referring to costars such as Al Pacino in *Heat* and Jack Nicholson in *Mars Attacks!* Currently, Portman can be seen on Broadway as the lead in *The Diary of Anne Frank.* And she's gearing up for her role as the young queen in the upcoming *Star Wars* prequels—projects that should give her a leg up on the kids in her drama class when she gets to college. —DANA BROWN





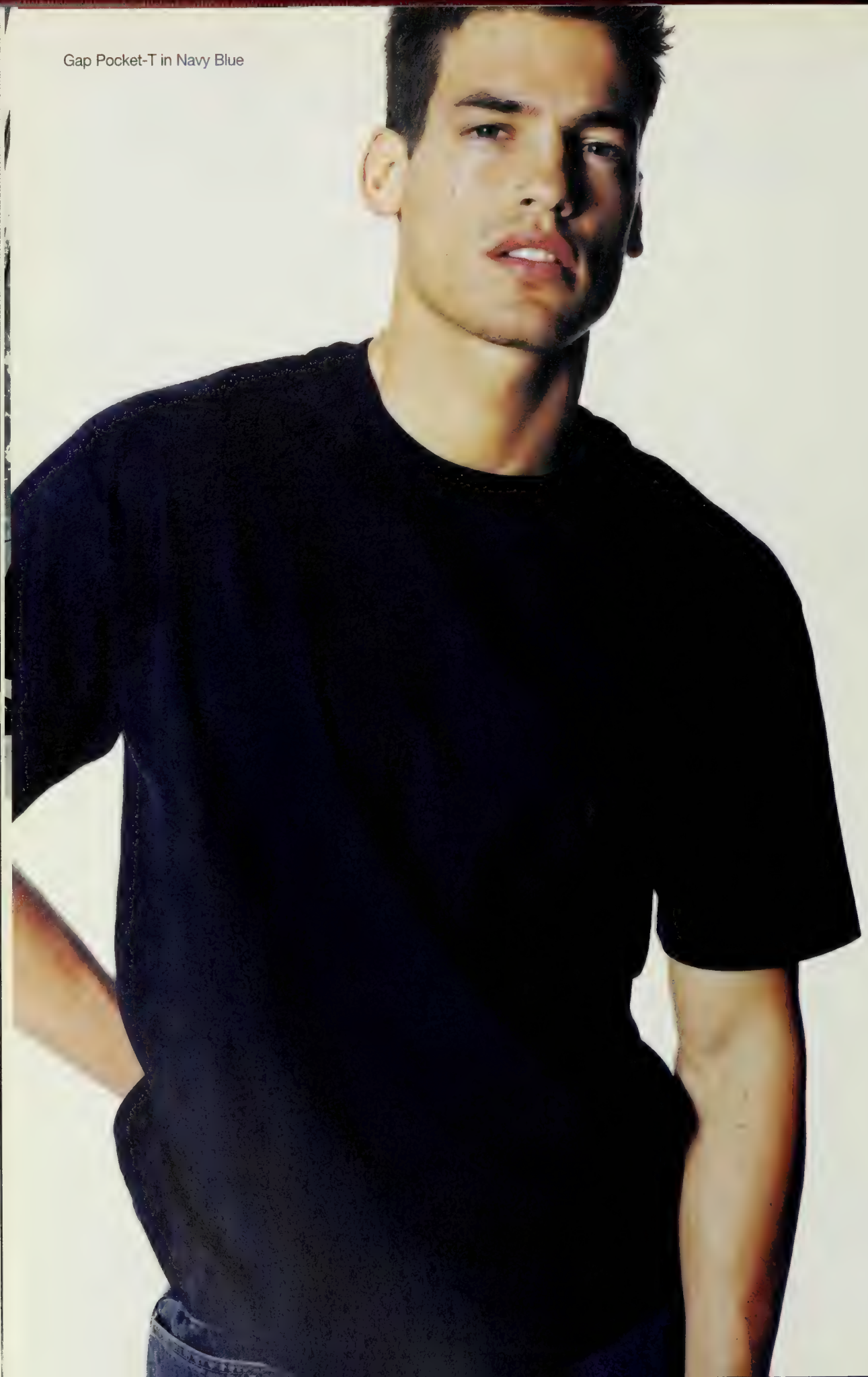
THREE MEN AND A LADY
Top, clockwise from bottom right: Natalie Portman (wearing a Jean Paul Gaultier top and skirt), Joaquin Phoenix, Vince Vaughn, and Djimon Hounsou (all wearing Donna Karan jackets and pants). *Above:* Hounsou, who received his first-ever manicure for the shoot, and Vaughn kick back with some Starbucks coffee. The café set up shop on location at Manhattan's Chrysler Building, providing the actors and crew with a steady stream of caffeine. *Left:* Portman goofs off with *V.F.* style assistant Vanessa Moore. All the men on the cover are wearing Sulka shirts, waistcoats, and bow ties; Jay Kos socks; and Asprey studs and cuff links. Edward Furlong is wearing Sulka shoes; all others are wearing Prada shoes. Photographs by Annie Leibovitz. Styled by Nicoletta Santoro.

"I don't think I ever read the script," **Joaquin Phoenix** says of Joseph Ruben's *All for One,* the *Midnight Express*–like drama he's just wrapped. He's kidding—though, right now, he spends more time with his new mountain bike than with screenplays. "I bought my girlfriend one for Christmas," he says. "It was so exciting that I bought myself one." The girlfriend is Liv Tyler, with whom he starred in last year's *Inventing the Abbotts.* But Phoenix, 23, is best remembered as the trailer-park killer in *To Die For.* His next film, *Clay Pigeons,* comes out in August, and he will also star with Nicolas Cage in Joel Schumacher's *8 Millimeter.* After that, Phoenix says, "I'm going to do a really big, stupid comedy where all I do is laugh." —KATE WESTERBECK

Growing up in Buffalo Grove, Illinois, **Vince Vaughn** was so hyperactive that his parents constantly "needed to keep me busy." It's not a problem anymore—not since he starred in *Swingers,* Doug Liman's 1996 indie hit that made him famous, thanks in part to his improvised hipster slang. "The catchphrases were all stuff I came up with," Vaughn says. After playing a photographer in *The Lost World,* he starred in *The Locusts;* this year he's the CONTINUED ON PAGE 118


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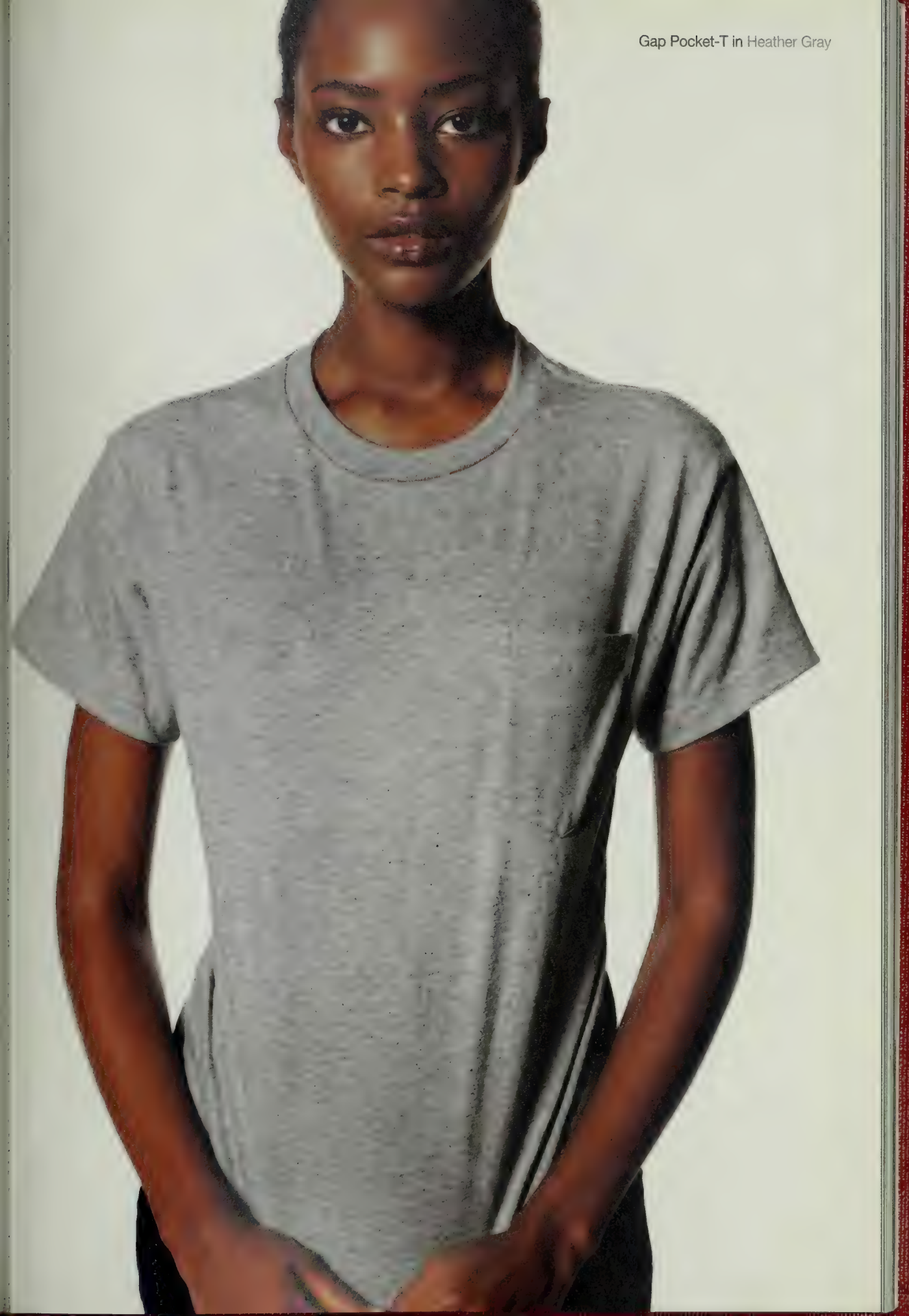




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A world beyond other cigars

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 106 lead in *Clay Pigeons* and *A Cool, Dry Place.* And he has just returned from a month in Asia, shooting *All for One,* in which he plays a "limo-driver anti-hero." Now, briefly, the lanky 28-year-old plans to rest. "I'll take a little bit of a break, but not much," he says. "I like making movies." —SARA SWITZER

Last year **Djimon Hounsou's** face was far more recognizable than his name. This was due to his striking looks (he was discovered by designer Thierry Mugler, who used him in an ad campaign) and the fact that his halting English limited his acting prospects. Then Steven Spielberg changed everything by casting Hounsou as Cinque, the slave who leads the failed mutiny in *Amistad.* Suddenly Hounsou, who was raised in the West African country of Benin, was up for a Golden Globe Award—a prospect that so unnerved him that he stayed in bed while the nominations were announced. Lately Hounsou, 33, has been sharpening his English by watching documentaries about animal mating on the Discovery Channel. "They're pretty graphic," he says. "But really interesting." Now Hounsou dreams of becoming "the first black leading man" in a Martin Scorsese film—and, for the record, he dreams in English. —BETH ALTSCHUL

"If an actor can give a great performance on-screen she is *bloody* good," says **Cate Blanchett,** the ingenu who, at 27, is already a seasoned stage actress, thank to her acclaimed performances in *Oleanna* and *Haml* in her native Australia. "Working in front of the cam era is so difficult because things are done in suc small quotients." In *Oscar and Lucinda,* directed b Gillian Armstrong and co-starring Ralph Fienne Blanchett gives a stunning performance as a trouble 19th-century heiress. This year she will play th young queen opposite Richard Attenborough in Shel har Kapur's *Elizabeth I* and the lead in *Dreamtim Alice,* which she is producing. Meantime, the outsp ken Aussie is being touted as—who else?—the ne Judy Davis. —JOHN GILLI

"I don't have that 'too cool' attitude about acting," sa **Tobey Maguire.** "It's a job, and I have to pay the rent But for all his practicality, the 22-year-old Angele masterfully conveyed teenage angst in two of last yea more memorable films Ang Lee's *The Ice Stor* and Woody Allen's *D constructing Harry.* M guire will soon appear Terry Gilliam's *Fear a Loathing in Las Vegas;* dark comedy called *Ple antville;* and *To Live On* Civil War drama direct by Ang Lee. Despite résumé, Maguire is wi eyed. "It was cool to p my Letterman cherry," says of a recent *L Night* appearance. As for his unflappable on-air demean he says, "It was all tomfoolery." —EVGENIA PER

Ever since **Claire Forlani** moved from London to Los A geles five years ago, she's been more American th most American actresses. She played Shannen Dohert nemesis in *Mallrats,* Neal Cassady's Beatnik girlfriend in *Last Time I Committed Suicide,* and the waitress who dured her painter boyfriend in *Basquiat.* "My accent depe on whom I'm around," says Forlani, who this summer st opposite Brad Pitt in Martin Brest's *Meet Joe Black.* Me while, the 26-year-old has grown accustomed to her n home—and its weather. While on the New England set her new film, *Elements,* "I was one CONTINUED ON PAGE







TOBEY OR NOT TOBEY
From top: Cate Blanchett (wearing a Pamela Dennis dress and Manolo Blahnik shoes), Tobey Maguire (wearing a Ralph Lauren jacket and pants), and Claire Forlani (wearing a John Galliano dress). V.F.'s assistant features editor, Beth Altschull, "sits in" for Natalie Portman while Maguire keeps his audience captive. Blanchett and Rufus Sewell monitor the day's progress. Despite pleas by Sewell and Maguire, who wanted to hear Radiohead during the shoot, the Verve's *Bittersweet Symphony* played all day long.

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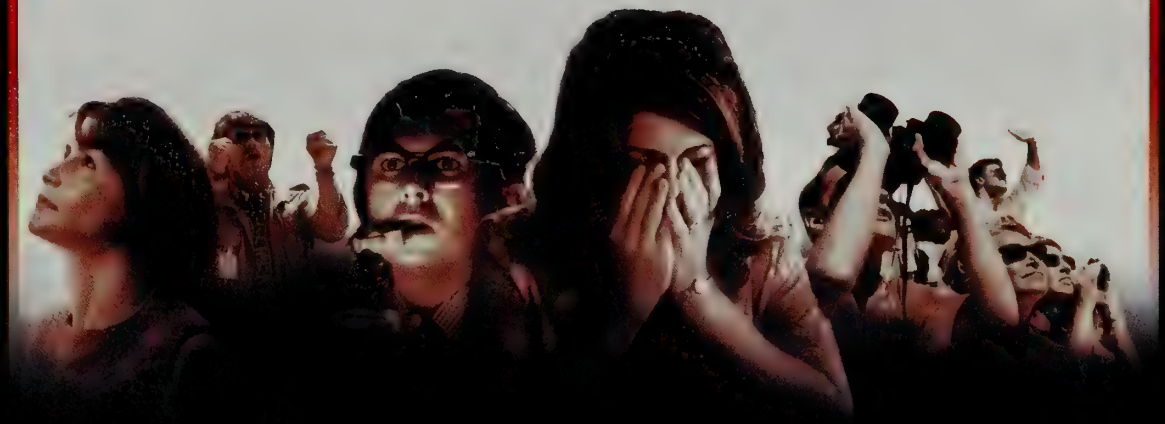
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SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON PLAY-TONE/EPIC RECORDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 115 of the freaks running in the snow. I saw this man in a big jacket coming towards me. I wondered what kind of freak would be doing this?" It was her co-star Rob Morrow. —CRAIG OFFMAN

In the last two years, **Gretchen Mol** has gone from one man to the next, cinematically speaking: directors Spike Lee, Abel Ferrara, and Woody Allen and actors Keanu Reeves, Jude Law, and Matt Damon, with whom she stars in the upcoming *Rounders*. "I'm glad they're good actors," Mol says, "not just pretty faces." Pretty impressive for a 25-year-old Connecticut girl who was discovered while checking coats at Michael's, the Manhattan restaurant. Blessed with a voice that can melt steel, talent too forceful to ignore, and looks reminiscent of pre–Hayes Office ingenues, Mol brings a retro glamour to the screen. All we need now is for Hitchcock to rise from the dead. —KRISTA SMITH







FURLONG DAY'S WORK
From left: Christina Ricci hugs photographer Annie Leibovitz. Nicoletta Santoro and the rest of the *V.F.* styling crew give Ricci and Edward Furlong some last-minute attention. Gretchen Mol (wearing a Tomasz Starzewski dress and Manolo Blahnik shoes), Ricci (wearing a Dolce & Gabbana dress and coat), Furlong (wearing a Ralph Lauren jacket and pants), and Rufus Sewell (wearing a Donna Karan jacket and pants).

Posing for paparazzi does not come naturally to **Christina Ricci,** who insists she's "always the one whose shoes are too big or who gets a run in her stocking." Ricci's ascent started in 1992, thanks to her darkly comedic role as Wednesday in *The Addams Family.* But her breakthrough came last year, when she played a disenchanted teen in *The Ice Storm.* This year Ricci will appear in *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* and *I Woke Up Early the Day I Died,* starring Billy Zane. And she has started a production company, Blaspheme Films. Still, she's only 18, as evidenced by her top professional highlight. "I got to kiss Billy Zane," Ricci says, "and I *love* him." —KIM KESSLER

"I never thought it would happen like this." **Edward Furlong** is describing the day when casting director Mali Finn approached him outside the Pasadena Boys and Girls Club and asked if he wanted to audition for a film called *Terminator 2.* Seven years and 11 movies later, the 20-year-old actor is now starring with Ed Norton in *American History X,* about skinhead brothers trying to reform themselves, and *Pecker,* a John Waters film about a boy whose photographs of working-class Baltimore life take the art world by storm. Furlong's uniquely carefree persona—he's into video games, mountain biking, and his girlfriend, Jacqueline Domac, who doubles as his manager—has kept the scripts coming. "On a typical Eddie day," he says, "I sleep in as late as possible and it all goes from there." —HILARY FRANK

Rufus Sewell is often described as "Byronic." Unfortunately, the 30-year-old Englishman doesn't know what that means—"other than not short and not blond." Well, the adjective certainly applied in 1995's *Cold Comfort Farm,* in which Sewell played an earthy lothario. And it fits his starring role in the upcoming drama *Dangerous Beauty,* a period love story set in Venice. Now Sewell is at work on *At Satchen Farm,* a love story co-starring Nigel Hawthorne and Minnie Driver. Sewell has yet to forsake London for Los Angeles, but worries that the distance will leave him known largely as "the actor who does films with the word 'farm' in them." Time to start packing. —PATRICIA HERRERA

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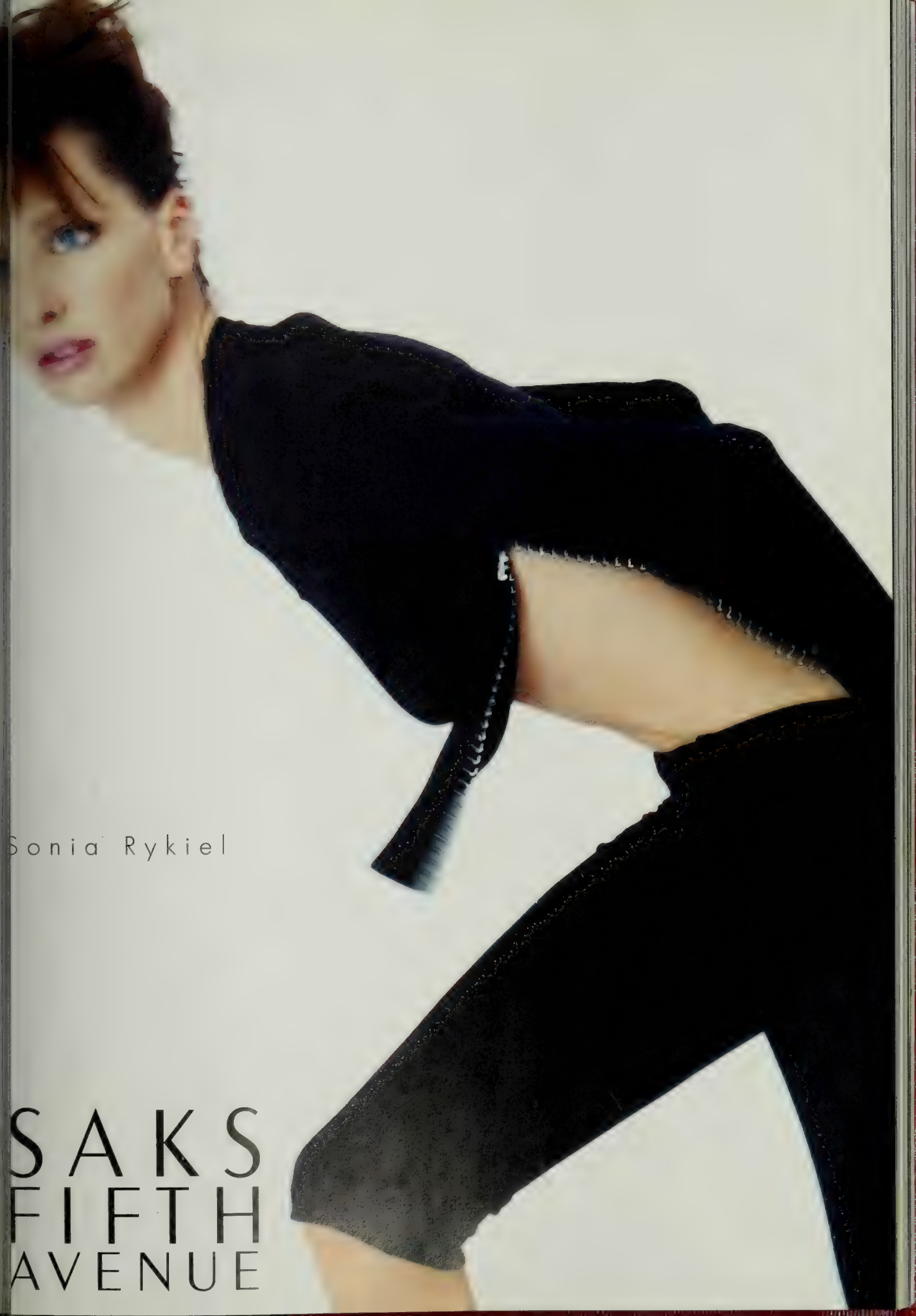

Giorgio Armani

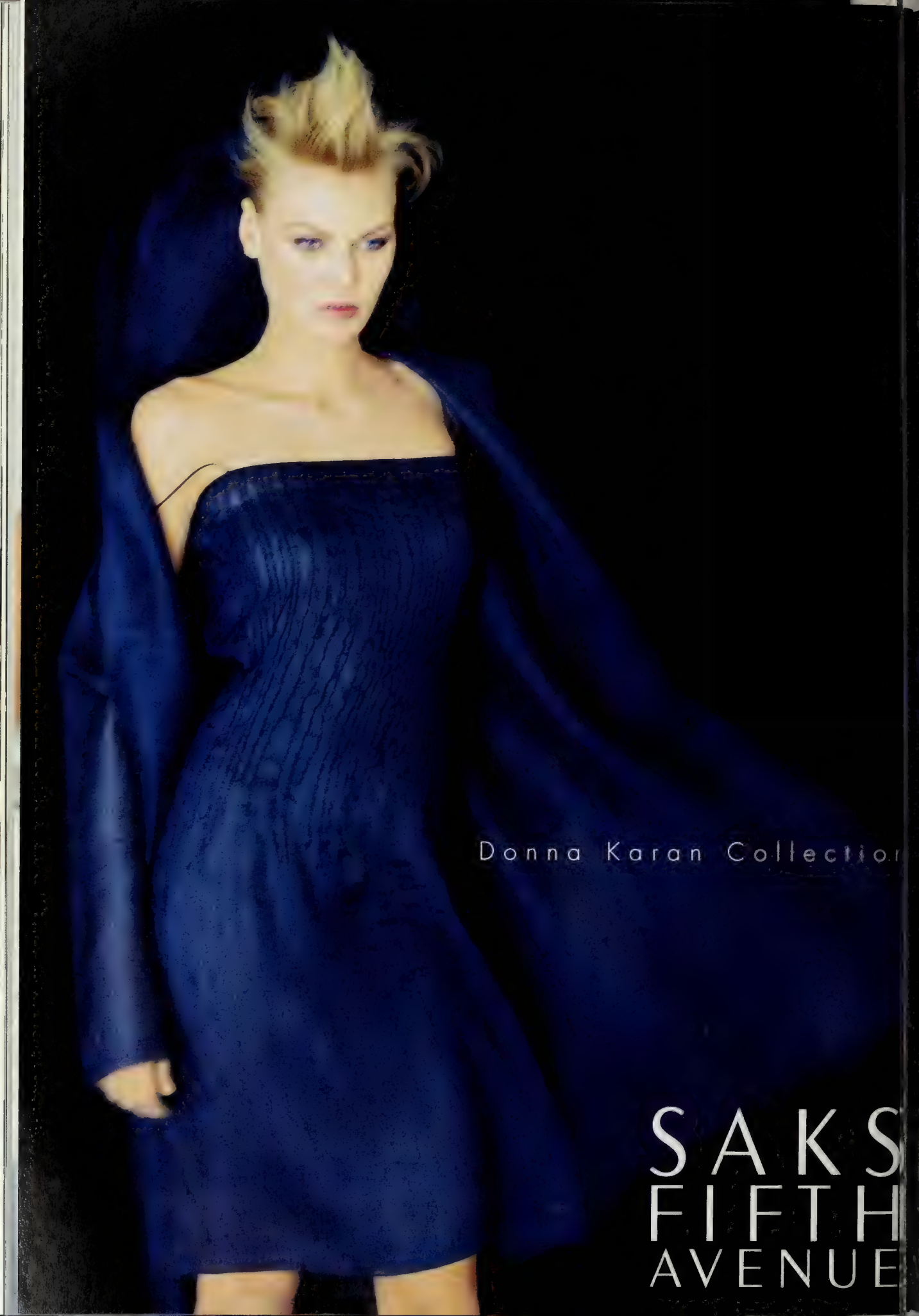

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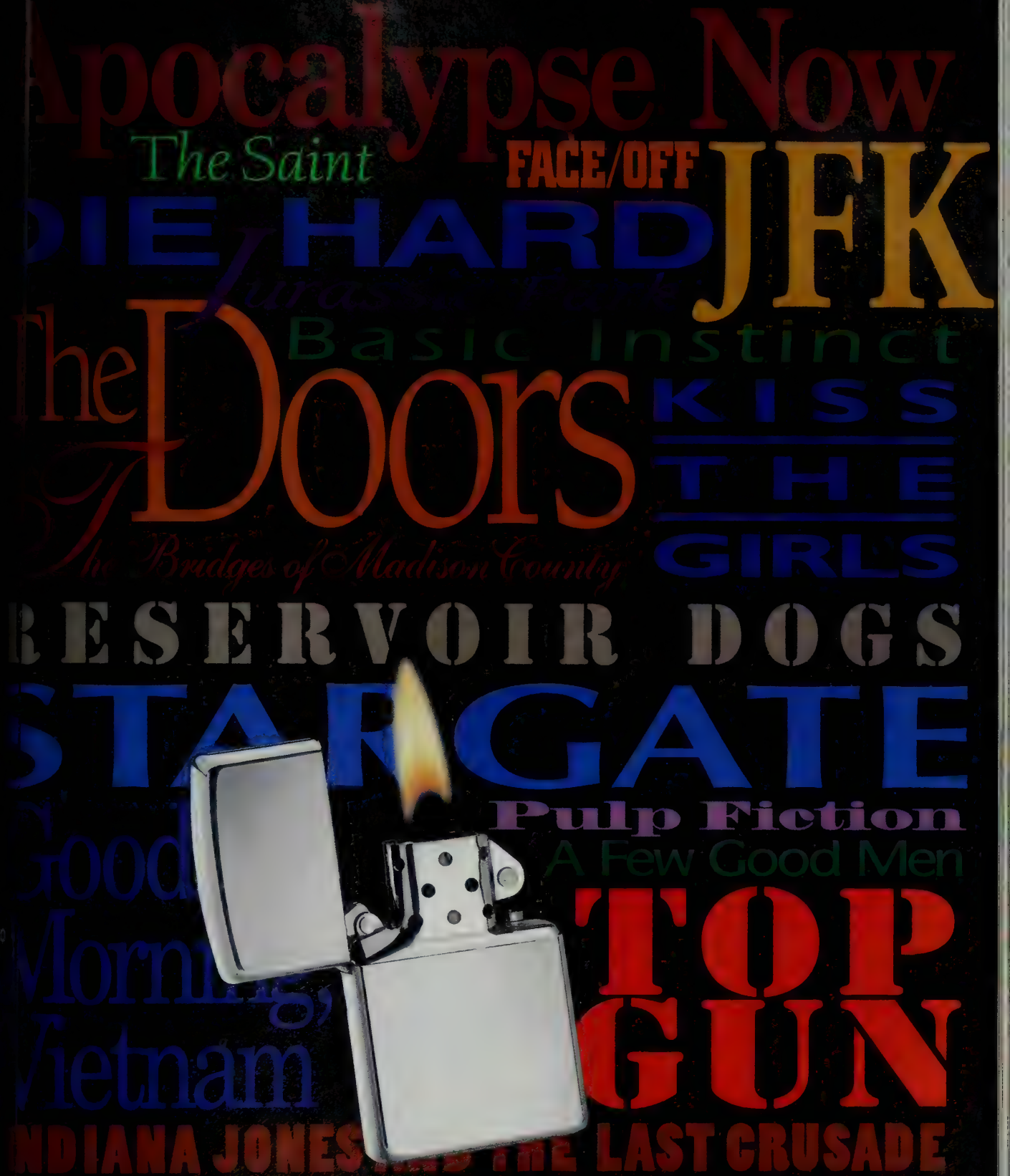

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Euro-reka! Brown has become a magnet for a jet-setting cast of international students, who, regardless of their origins, are often called "Euros" on campus. Here, Beatle George Harrison's son, Dhani (foreground), joins friends at Viva, a Providence hot spot.

TALK OF THE BROWN

Jennet Conant's "School for Glamour" [February] was not entirely off the mark. Brown is indeed a bastion of extremes: the committed intellectual, the genius, the humble artist, the spoiled brat, the famous sperm, and the pathetic opportunist. I couldn't help but smile as I perused the names and faces of my polyglot former classmates—all reminders of our off-campus indulgence and misguided arrogance. We generally loved our image more than we loved one another.

People seem to consistently mistake notoriety for actual achievement and, in so doing, see one another as titled opportunities and commodities rather than as souls or true friends. Conant's article clearly illustrated this tendency at Brown. We still love "spectacle" even when there's nothing very spectacular behind it: for Range Rovers on Benefit Street, weekend skiing in the Alps, and bragging about Dad's place in the Caribbean are not even close to what life is about—nor are they entirely what Brown is about.

MATTHEW R. V. PIEPENBURG
St.-Cyprien, France

IT'S WONDERFUL TO READ about beautiful, rich, influential, famous people who send their "Euro" children to Brown, but do not lose sight of the majority of students and families who work hard to make a Brown education possible.

AUDREY DREIBELBIS
Arlington, Virginia

AS A 1995 GRADUATE of Brown University, I read "School for Glamour" with amusement. I didn't know anyone at Brown who wore ascots to the cafeteria or painted their rooms eggshell white. The students I knew were high achievers with questionable personal hygiene, bulging book bags, and enormous student loans.

I did rub elbows with one of your "beautiful young things." Dressed in a chic catering uniform from the Salvation Army, I served John F. Kennedy Jr. a piece of pie at his class reunion.

It doesn't take a degree in semiotics to deconstruct why a magazine about fashion and glamour runs an article on glamour and fashion.

REBECCA BAILEY
East Meredith, New York

IF AN OVERWHELMING number of recent Brown graduates loved former president Vartan Gregorian, it certainly is not because he attracted a few children of tycoons and celebrities; instead, we admired him because he fostered very high rates of student volunteer work, adamantly fought racism, personally intervened with thousands of members of the Brown community, increased the size of the library, and strengthened many academic programs.

The real reason that Brown's students make the college appear to be the "hot Ivy" is that the great majority have idealistic, forward-looking, generous, creative, and entrepreneurial souls and aspire not so much to personal wealth or status but rather—honest, trust me—to making the world a better place.

CRISTINA LOUISE TALLARIGO
New York, New York

CAN IT REALLY BE—in the United States of America, on the cusp of the 21st century—that a handful of students are so cocksure and so insensitive to their community that they feel they can get



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away with living quietly and mastering their studies, instead of sucking up to one another?

ERIC HUBLER
Brooklyn, New York

BY MY COUNT "School for Glamour" names more than 60 so-called famous or glamorous alums from Brown and proceeds to describe the lifestyle they helped to foster while at Brown. Considering that Brown is a school of 5,500 undergraduates, I question the generalizations made from the sample included. It is one thing to assert that this rarefied lifestyle existed at Brown; it is quite another to suggest it is the norm or even common.

The article makes no effort to compare the celebrity quotient of Brown's student body with those of similar universities. Ivy League and comparable schools are filled to the brim with the offspring of world leaders, Hollywood celebrities, and wealthy "Beautiful People." Conant happily creates the impression that Brown is unique in its number of celebrated alums; this conclusion, however, is at best unsupported and most likely false.

MATT CARROLL
Cleveland, Ohio

YOU MENTIONED BMWs more times than I actually saw them on campus.

LIBBY ANKER
Boston, Massachusetts

I WENT TO BROWN before the "new curriculum" was instituted, and my son got a degree from there in the 1990s. Despite a generation gap, we shared a common Brown experience: we learned how to think and how to get along with people of all colors, religions, ethnic origins, and life experiences. And we took those lessons into the world.

LAWRENCE A. RAND
Rye Brook, New York

AS ONE WHO KNOWS Brown well (I was the director of admission from 1969 to 1988) I want to give some perspective to Conant's story. The notion that in the 1970s Brown was the Ivy "back door" is ridiculous. Putting together a bright and creative student community is a long-term endeavor, and the whole university is involved. It also requires taking chances. After all, some of Brown's international students are known as "Eurotrash." The important matter is that Brown was willing to make admission decisions that other universities would not, because their selection committees were too afraid of their institutions' demic reputations. They would not mit a low-ranking student no matter interesting he/she might have been.

JAMES H. ROC
Castine, M

THERE ARE MANY inaccuracies and substantiated generalizations in Je Conant's article. I would like to set record straight:

1. Since the article was suppose be about my nine-year tenure as p dent of Brown University, I agreed brief telephone interview with Ms. nant concerning the success of Bro curriculum and its major campaig strengthen its faculty and rebuild it frastructure. I told her that my s dard fund-raising speech and appe the alumni and the Brown commu was that Brown belongs to a clu academic excellence, that such e lence has a "price tag," and that alumni must invest in their *alma m* if we are to remain excellent. I have peated this appeal to our faculty, students, and our parents' council. Conant quotes this out of cont strongly implying that the above is pitch to rich parents of applicant Brown. That is untrue. I have *n* made such a statement to the par of applicants.

2. I never "reserved" a "certain n ber of places" for the children of affl or famous parents, however promin nor have I ever issued a "directive" t cruit wealthy international students means to balance Brown's budget. T budget has been balanced for 18 y due in large measure to the fact that did not spend, nor plan to spend, w we did not have.

3. Most of the children of "famo parents that Ms. Conant names gra ated from Brown before my ten some 10 or 15 years ago, others du my first year. It may come as a prise to Ms. Conant that I know on handful of them.

4. The competition for entry Brown is very stiff, but meritocratic: ing the past four years, 67,000 stud from the United States and 106 count applied to the university; only 5, were matriculated. The class of 2 alone included 1,300 valedictorians am its applicants. One of every two fr men ranked first, second, third, fou or fifth in his or her high-school grad ing class. During my presidency no came to Brown through the back d Everyone had to compete for admiss

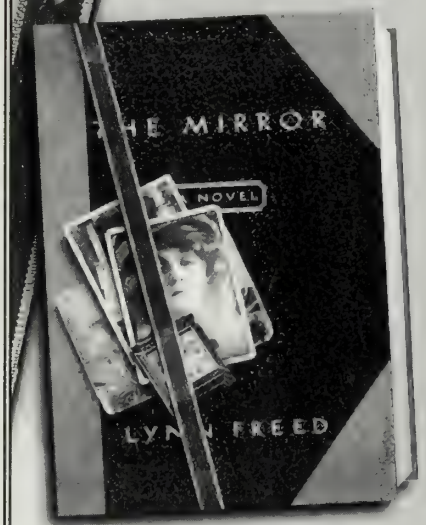

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Letters

Brown has a very diverse student body. In the class of 2001, 30 percent of matriculants were minority members, 4 percent were from the state of Rhode Island, and 9 percent were international. Currently 41 percent of the students who attend Brown are on full or partial scholarships.

5. Brown has an enormously talented and idealistic student body. Eighty percent of the students go on to pursue graduate or professional studies at the nation's top universities. One out of four students is a volunteer in the community and the nation. Many are on scholarship and/or work very hard to pay for their education. They deserve our recognition and respect.

Also, for the record: Jacqueline Onasis [*sic*] did not give "millions" to the New York Public Library or Brown; and I am an American.

VARTAN GREGORIAN
President emeritus, Brown University
New York, New York

THE FACT THAT BROWN has become one of the most desirable universities in the country is no surprise to those who work, study, and live here. Jennet Conant's description of Brown as a society of money and privilege simply does not ring true.

Conant was right that Brown attracts talented and creative students. And it is true that Brown students learn a great deal from one another, as Doug Liman and Lisa Loeb observed. And, yes, the unique Brown curriculum encourages stimulating and rigorous—if sometimes unconventional—courses of study.

It is unfortunate that Conant never visited the campus and that the only educational authority she quotes is an independent consultant who incorrectly assumed that Brown's popularity among members of the international elite must mean there is a way to buy admission to Brown.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. That kind of transaction simply does not occur and never has occurred at Brown. Every successful applicant—rich or poor, American or European, biology major or athlete—must demonstrate academic ability and intellectual promise. There are no exceptions.

People who live and work here know Brown as a campus of great social, geographic, ethnic, and economic diversity. That's partly because Brown pledges to meet 100 percent of the demonstrated financial need for all admitted students who request aid. Much of our academic and institutional excellence comes from that diversity.

LAURA FREID
Executive vice president, External Affairs
Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island

EDITOR'S NOTE: In response to Vartan Gregorian's points:

1. The focus of the article was Brown's remarkable turnaround, which began before Gregorian's tenure and has continued since. "School for Glamour" was never intended to be solely about Gregorian's presidency.

2. When Jennet Conant writes, "The president can reserve a few places for V.I.P.'s" (misquoted by Gregorian in his letter), she was merely indicating that it was within his power to fill some of the spaces in a new class as he saw fit. A number of sources confirm that this was unofficially the case, when a child from a wealthy family expressed a desire to attend Brown, his parents would "talk to Vartan." Brown does not have completely need-blind admissions (the policy of accepting students regardless of their financial need), and cannot admit all students without regard for their ability to afford the tuition. During Conant's interview with Gregorian, which lasted close to an hour, he stated that 50 students every year were admitted to Brown based in part on their ability to pay. This is not to say, however, that they don't meet other qualifications as well.

Vanity Fair *never says Gregorian issued a "directive" (the word doesn't appear in the article) to recruit wealthy international students, only that the university began recruiting at prestigious foreign boarding schools when Gregorian took over.*

3. Nowhere does the article assert that most of the children of famous parents mentioned graduated during his tenure (although many did).

His fourth and fifth points do not refute anything in the article. In fact, some of what he says was included.

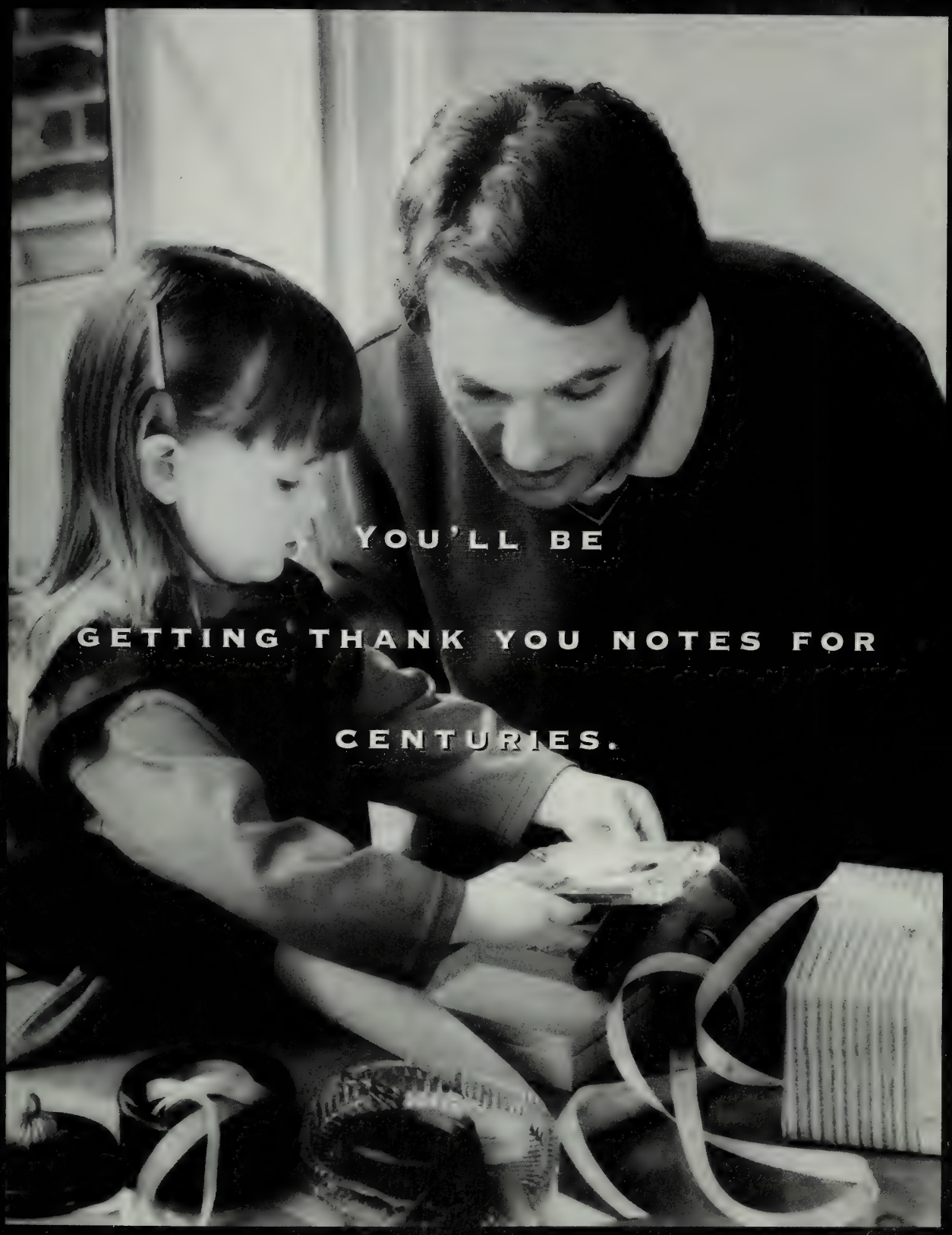
V.F. *doesn't state that Jacqueline Onassis gave millions to the New York Public Library, simply that Gregorian raised millions from rich patrons such as Onassis—as well as Brooke Astor, Andrew Heiskell, Wall Street figures, foundations, and corporations.*

And, finally, Gregorian may be an American citizen, but that doesn't change the fact that he is originally from Armenia.

For the record, contrary to what Laura Freid assumes in her letter, in addition to interviewing dozens of Brown alumni and current students, Jennet Conant visited the campus and was given a guided tour by a recent graduate.

On a Claire Day

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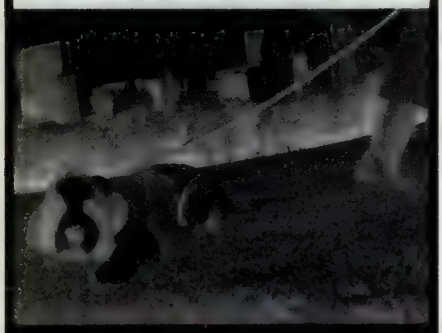
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Claire-ity: "She's like a prism," says Gabriel Byrne of Claire Danes. "Depending on which way she hits the light, you get a different Claire."

flower, who gives us her heart in every performance. Watching her act is like catching a glimpse of a shooting star and knowing you were the only one who saw it. I'm already in line for her next film.

SCOTT McCORD
Toronto, Ontario

HOW AMAZING SHE IS! That's what I kept saying to myself after reading Kevin Sessums' article. It gave me another look at the offscreen Claire, and she proved as intelligent, interesting, and fun as I've always believed.

JESSICA LUCAS
Los Angeles, California

LET'S SEE: in the past three months your cover has featured Matt Damon, Leonardo DiCaprio, and now Claire Danes. Who's next? Hanson? I guess it's safe to cancel my *Tiger Beat* subscription.

JOHN F. CASSANOS
San Francisco, California

JUST WHEN I WAS REALLY starting to enjoy languishing in the long, sweet, never-ending years of my early 30s, I happen upon Claire Danes and realize . . . I am old, so very, very old.

WILLIAM REID
London, Ontario

Civil Actions

AFTER READING Taylor Branch's i
triguing and often maddening "Hear
on Fire" [January], I now, more tha
ever before in my life, realize th
thanks to the grace of God and t
human soldiers He sent into battle
enjoy a wonderful job, live in t
neighborhood of my choice, receive
an outstanding (integrated) educatio
without a hint of hatred or bodi
harm, can sit anywhere that I plea
and befriend whom I will. And I c
all these things tending to forget th
when I was born 35 years ago the
were no such easy freedoms for a litt
black girl growing up in the South.
know that the fight for civil rights
far from over, but I am living pro
that the battle did not begin nor do
it continue in vain.

SHEREE RO
Dallas, Tex

I FOUND TAYLOR BRANCH'S excerpt
essay both captivating and horrifying.
is still hard to believe that such even
took place while I was growing up
the 1960s. I will certainly read his enti

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book on the subject and thank *V.F.* for publishing the excerpt.

STEVEN L. EBER
Coral Gables, Florida

The Gold of Exodus

I FOUND MYSELF FROWNING when I read the title "Mount Sinai's Deadly Treasure" [by Howard Blum, February] because as a believer in God I'm usually disgusted by the media's portrayal of anything that has to do with God or the Bible. But I was immediately sucked into the Indiana Jones adventure that unrolled before me. I felt suspense and fear for the two explorers, whom I desperately wanted not to get caught, and cheered when they escaped the site safely. But, more important, reassurance and excitement washed over me as all the things that have been seen as stories or simply lies became substantial and real.

The walking-on-water photo of Williams and Cornuke reminded me that in Sunday Bible school I never got sick of hearing about Moses making a yellow brick road home for God's lost Dorothys. But the fired-up nostalgia gave way to a disappointment in myself because, as a woman of faith, I needed to see physical evidence to chase away the doubt that arises every now and then. These archaeological discoveries should be only for those who need convincing, not for those who can see the holy treasures with their eyes closed.

CAROLINE SUH
Westwood, California

BLUM'S ARTICLE CONTAINS all the cla sic components used to generate the E ropean exoticist-exploiter's story: intr pid Western adventurers (Fasold, W liams, and Cornuke), the "Arab" en my/bad guy (simply dark figures wh oppose the "holy" efforts), and licens for the adventurers to get what the want, which comes in the form of " Mission from God"—to find the tru Mount Sinai. Never mind that thes men illegally penetrated a country b forging documents in order to go loo ing for something they claimed to b theirs by "right."

VALERIE ORLAND
West Lafayette, India

The March of the *Times*

IN A DAY AND AGE when the 3(second sound bite on CNN is too lor and newspapers across the country a in decline (and those that haven closed are filling their pages with mo ads than articles), it is a comfort ar joy to me that *The New York Tim* ["Paper Monster," by James Wolcot February] has increased the number its articles. It is a euphoric feeling " not only read the *Times,* but to sl into it like a warm bubble bath" (apol gies to Marshall McLuhan).

LORI J. BERR
Salt Lake City, Ut

GIVEN THE INCREDIBLE number trees that must fall to provide paper f



ANDREW MACPHERSON

Biblical contortions: Bob Cornuke and Larry Williams traveled to Jabal al Lawz, a mountain in Saudi Arabia which they suspect is the actual Mount Sinai, where—according to the Bible—Moses received the Ten Commandments. Cornuke and Williams believe they found the site where Moses crossed the Red Sea, the valley where the Israelites camped on their flight from Egypt, and the altar of the golden calf. Jabal al Lawz is currently a Saudi military outpost.

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Paper chase: Readers on New York subways have a hard time with the extra sections of the revamped daily New York Times, *but at least they have that day's news. The new, improved* Times *is often delivered late to subscribers outside the metropolitan area.*

just one edition, I found it ironic that the *Times* devoted an entire special section to global warming, an important cause of which is worldwide deforestation.

JACK MORROW
Long Beach, California

NEW YORK TIMES SUBSCRIBERS in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, would gladly trade expanded sections to be able to have the newspaper delivered on the day that it's printed.

Our distribution point is less than 150 miles from New York City, but since last summer the *Times* circulation department hasn't been able to get the newspaper here in time for delivery with other morning papers, among them the *New York Post,* the *Daily News,* and *The Wall Street Journal.* The excuse is a change in deadlines.

My fellow subscribers and I can't decide whether we're extraordinarily loyal or extremely loco, but we continue to read the *Times* even though it arrives on our doorsteps a day late.

IONE GEIER
Pottsville, Pennsylvania

JUST TRY to get the *Times* delivered in northern New Jersey before seven A.M. After weeks of complaining, I finally called and canceled weekday service. The young man who took the call simply said "O.K." When I asked if he was interested in the reason for the cancellation, I almost heard the shrug through the phone—his response was "No."

KATHLEEN McCARTHY
Ringwood, New Jersey

Dead Man Fighting

YES, SONNY LISTON ["The Outla Champ," by Nick Tosches, Februar was awkward and somewhat tentative his first fight against Muhammad A but he definitely came to fight. H downfall was Ali's youth, unconve tional footwork, superior hand spee and ability to take a punch and mo out of harm's way. Ali was hardly ev where Liston thought he'd be when let his punches loose. Frustration, c under his eyes, and the knowledge th Ali was for real ended that first fight seriously doubt that Liston premedit ed a dive. It seems that the second fig where the evidence of a dive is mu stronger, has colored Tosches's vision the first.

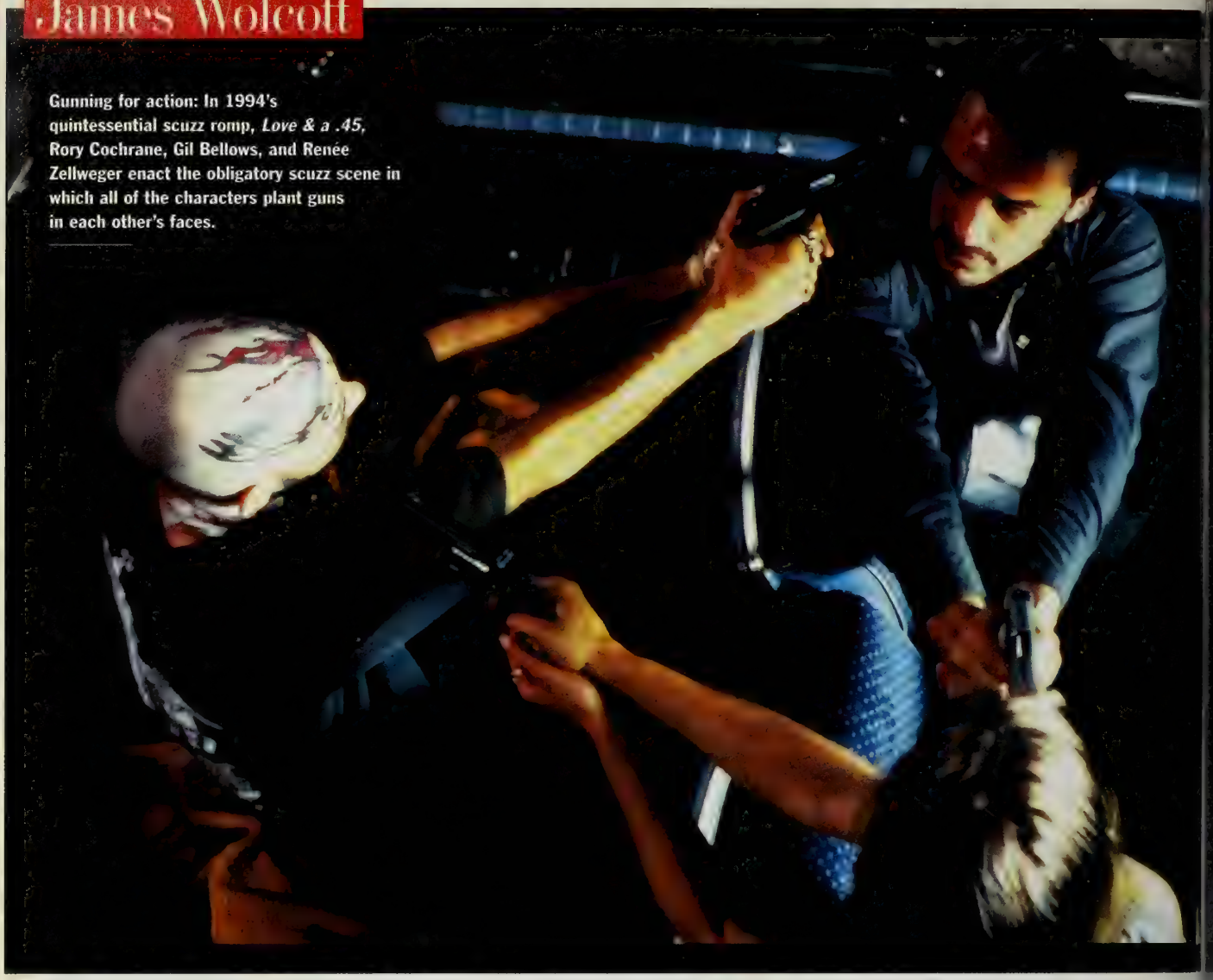
NICK MAMO
Camp Hill, Pennsylva

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James Wolcott



Gunning for action: In 1994's quintessential scuzz romp, *Love & a .45*, Rory Cochrane, Gil Bellows, and Renée Zellweger enact the obligatory scuzz scene in which all of the characters plant guns in each other's faces.

LIVE FAST, DIE YOUNG, AND LEAVE A BIG STAIN

"Scuzz" movies steeped the 90s cinema in violence, perversion, and greasy food, providing star roles for such dark talents as Christopher Walken, Eric Roberts, and Juliette Lewis. But the genre may be dying fast, a victim of its own grisly decadence

Last autumn, a movie genre died, and nobody mourned. No one even knew its name. The deceased was dumped on the side of the road like so many of its own celluloid victims. It was a genre majoring in violence, deviance, and lots of lip, incorporating influences ranging from *Mad Max* to the 70s "kick-ass" porn parodied in *Boogie Nights,* from the grainy, graphic shots of junkies popping veins and posing with guns in Larry Clark's legendary photo album *Tulsa* to the balletic blood gushers of Hong Kong action pulp. A Hong Kong action film called *City on Fire* was reputed to have furnished the basic scenario for Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), which stands as one of the defining graffiti-strewn landmarks of what might be called scuzz cinema. The herpes virus of movie genres, scuzz cinema earns its name from the pervasive, in-your-face, foulmouthed scuzziness of its low-life characters, situations, and atmosphere, all of which convey the bottom falling out of civilization. Scuzz is where prison tattoos and navel rings meet and mate on a bare mattress to the blue fire of a crack pipe. Its motto might be "Live fast, die young, and leave a big stain." No scuzz film seems complete without (a) a hostage-taking situation, (b) a torture-interrogation scene, and (c) a shoot-out in a diner. History will show that scuzz cinema ascended with *Reservoir Dogs* and David Lynch's *Wild at Heart,* reached its baroque phase with Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* and Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers,* and wiped out last fall with the dual flops of Stone's *U-Turn* and, from the team behind *Trainspotting,* the highly touted film *A Life Less Ordinary.* Under that arc clogging the racks of video-rental stores and late-night cable schedules, are scads of titles (un)worthy enough to be called


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scuzz. For quick identification: Almost anything co-starring Michael Madsen as a malevolent load qualifies, as does any movie in which a hood models a punk-blond dye job (Timothy Hutton in *Playing God,* Stephen Dorff in *City of Industry*). Anything starring Eric Roberts carries a Scuzz Guarantee. (He always takes his shirt off, his tenderloin physique a road map to hell.) Juliette Lewis, Jennifer Tilly, Patricia Arquette—the dangerous babes they play are scuzz's foxy ladies.

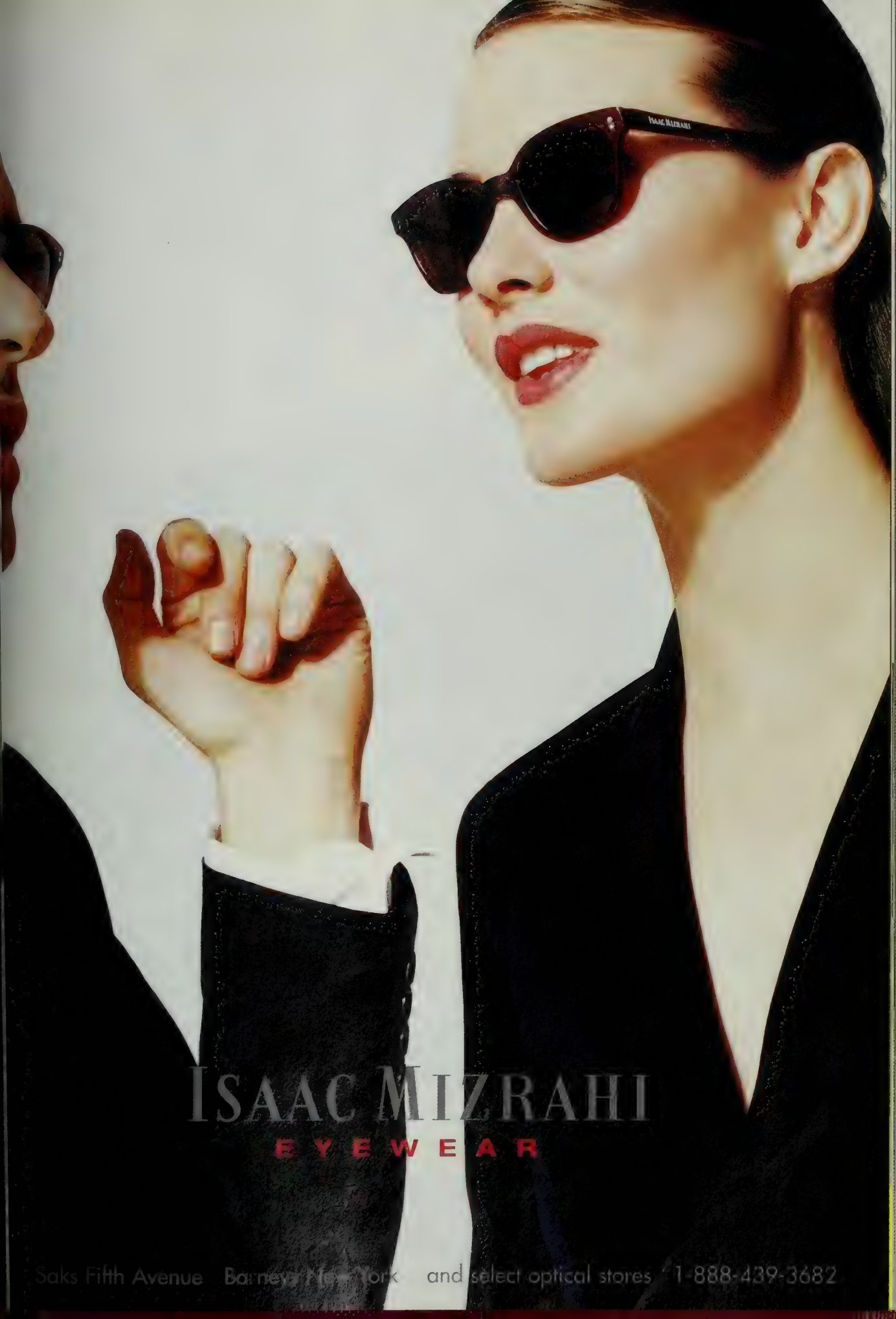
On one level scuzz is a generational phenomenon, evolving as a mangy cousin to the slacker film (slacker films being what we had before *Friends*). Both genres feature ensemble casts, share some of the same smooth faces (Eric Stoltz, James Spader), and exude a malaise too amorphous to be articulated. Even lively conversations seem to take place under a cloud of depression. Children of divorce, baby-sat by the TV set and left to forage for their own snacks, the cliquish twentysomethings in both of these genres are ironically detached, emotionally wary, and (in the absence of grand passions or causes) short-term pragmatic. The difference is that in scuzz films the social dropouts and mongrel misfits have turned feral. (One scuzz film is even called *American Strays.*) In slacker films such as *Reality Bites, Singles,* and *Bodies, Rest & Motion,* the characters clump on the sofa, chain-smoke, and chat; in scuzz films, they crowd into a car, chain-smoke, and kill. The chief adults in their unparented world tend to be demented, despotic Mephistophelian figures—usually played by Christopher Walken, a witty observer of his own corrosion, or Dennis Hopper, who chews his lines as if eating lightbulbs—whose dissipation, resilience, and fine tailoring give these young hell-raisers something to aim for once they get out of rehab. (*The Last Days of Frankie the Fly,* in which Hopper plays not a pit bull but a patsy, is excruciating.) Where a slacker cast seems to inch by on antidepressants, wan and adaptive, a scuzz cast acts strung out on heroin, close-knit yet nihilistic. Not only do scuzz films often portray drug deals gone bad and show characters shooting up, freebasing, etc., the movies themselves unfold like drug deals in disguise, private, encoded gatherings with a lot of heavy-duty loitering and circular sub-Mamet conversations interrupted by spastic eruptions of pique. In *Keys to Tulsa,* in which a cigarette-puffing Eric Stoltz falls in love with a junkie stripper (whose small, unenhanced breasts are meant to be poignant), and a menacing James Spader mumbles from beneath an Elvis hairdo, the scenes don't so much fade out as nod out.

Although most scuzz films are built around crimes, they are not primarily about the detailed execution of crimes—the shrewd planning, the seamless teamwork. There are few criminal masterminds in scuzz, mostly humar coyotes on the make. (Which is why Mi chael Mann's *Heat,* though it features truly horrific tattooed pervert, isn't scuzz film—the clash between Al Pacin and Robert De Niro carries too keen finish of professionalism.) In scuzz greed is more of a glandular condition The bad guys pursue money as if it were their last meal. The precursor of scuz cinema, its demon seed, can be spotte in Sam Peckinpah's otherwise formula driven bank-heist movie, *The Getaway* starring Steve McQueen and Ali Mac Graw. A beefy thug played by Al Le tieri takes a mild-mannered dentis (Jack Dodson—Howard Sprague on *Th Andy Griffith Show*) and his twatty wif (a squealing Sally Struthers) hostage lolling in bed with the wife as the hus

"No scuzz film seems complete without a shoot-out in a dine



Great moments in scuzz: *Clockwise from top left,* Christopher Walken and bodyguards interrogate Dennis Hopper in *True Romance;* Juliette Lewis, Woody Harrelson, and their rifle in *Natural Born Killers;* Tim Roth shoots up a diner in *Pulp Fiction;* scuzz staple Eric Roberts in *Heaven's Prisoners;* Chow Yun-Fat and friends in John Woo's scuzz-inspiring *City on Fire;* scuzz siren Patricia Arquette in *True Romance.*


ISAAC MIZRAHI
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band, tied to a chair, is forced to watch. When they hit the road in pursuit of McQueen and MacGraw, Struthers and Lettieri have a lovers' spat in the car, flinging spareribs at each other and smearing the windshield while the husband looks sick and trapped. (He later hangs himself.) In its nasty pungency that car scene establishes the Big Three of scuzz film: sex, sadism, and greasy appetite—the white-trash combination platter. Peckinpah later made a film that was skanky through and through, a sick puppy called *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia,* in which Warren Oates is literally buried alive, but it was too gnomic and personal a mortality statement for other filmmakers to follow. *The Getaway* modern West which is half ghost town, half 7-11. A jangly pinball machine of a film, *Wild at Heart* took to the road less in the spirit of escape than in a freakish zeal to rack up more fatalities.

Most dangerous job in a scuzz film: gas-station attendant.

Second most dangerous job in a scuzz film: convenience-store operator.

What the writer-director-motormouth Quentin Tarantino added to the mix was an encyclopedic command of movie lore sopped up from the sticky linoleum of every video store in America and a white Negro's—wigger's—infatuation with ghetto slang and ing street-corner seminars on the semiotics of Betty and Barney Rubble. After Tarantino, the threats, insults, references, became florid. "I'm gonna get medieval on your ass," the man says in *Pulp Fiction,* an instant catchphrase which spurred subsequent screenwriters to come up with endless variations of "I'll blow a hole in you so big . . . " (. . . a train will come out the other side). Before making *Jackie Brown,* a deliberately downshifted affair where you can almost feel him mentally imaging himself into maturity, Tarantino slapped his face and sponsorship onto a number of junior scuzz films which were attempts to cop a spark from the runoff energy of *Pulp Fiction.* One dire

"Anything starring Eric Roberts carries a Scuzz Guarantee"







Highways to hell: In *The Getaway,* Sam Peckinpah's 1972 Ur–scuzz film, Sally Struthers gnaws on a spareribs while being held hostage by Al Lettieri; Warren Oates shoots 'em up in Peckinpah's *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia* (1974); one of many rough-sex scenes between Nicolas Cage and Laura Dern in *Wild at Heart* (1990).

inspired scuzz because all scuzz films are essentially getaways—criminal flights.

Following the critical triumph of *Blue Velvet* and *Twin Peaks,* David Lynch went completely jitterbug with *Wild at Heart* (1990), a raucous fiasco from which his career has yet to recover. (Lynch's most recent effort, *Lost Highway,* was his sputtering drive to the end of the night to find his way home.) But *Wild at Heart* was a wrong turn that other filmmakers also found beckoning. Extending sex, sadism, and greasy appetite into arty absurdism, the movie establishes the defining elements of 90s scuzz cinema: all-out hollow acting (Nicolas Cage, who is as loud as his rockabilly getup); kinky, roughhouse sex (Cage and Laura Dern mating like slam-dancers); body waste (flies buzzing around a pool of vomit); gory dismemberment (a severed hand reminiscent of *Yojimbo*); freakish supporting characters, as if the movie had been cast from a degenerative gene pool (I recall one woman misapplying so much lipstick that her face turned red); shoot-outs and car chases conducted in a pimp prerogative. Although Tarantino has been compared to Martin Scorsese, Scorsese's strength is visual—he compels the viewer's eye to do calisthenics—while Tarantino is solid tongue. With its infamous torture-interrogation scene, *Reservoir Dogs* is guy talk taken to the extreme. *Pulp Fiction* transcends scuzz through the star charms of John Travolta and Uma Thurman, whose "Batman" dance operates on a more iconic plane than the movie's slapstick bloodshed, but its self-referential wise-guy pop-culture dialogue about Big Macs proved to be its biggest legacy. In *film noir,* the characters, sleepwalking toward fate, often faltered when they spoke, as if attempting to read their lines through the fog. In scuzz, the characters riff as if they were conduct- example: *Curdled,* whose title refers to the blood coagulating at a crime scene. (A friend described seeing *Curdled* as being one of those stranded experiences where there are more people on-screen than there are in the theater.)

Tarantino's films compound their tension by being geographically contained. Horizons contract for his small-time schemers, which makes his movies an exception to the scuzz ethos. Most scuzz films, eating the dust of *The Getaway* and *Wild at Heart,* chase up and down the American West. A number of them even bear western place-names—*Baja, Keys to Tulsa, Things to Do in Denver When You're Dead* (which sure left a dent in Andy Garcia's career) and *Truth or Consequences, N.M.* Las Vegas is also a popular outpost, providing the soulless neon pulsation of Paul Thomas Anderson's *Hard Eight,* a character study with scuzz coating, Alex Cox's *The Winner,* an elaborate goof that trifles away the show-pony presence of Rebecca DeMornay, and *Night of the Running Man,* which sends Andrew McCarthy fleeing the Mob and



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in the movie's obligatory T.-I. scene, getting his feet dunked in a tub of scalding water. Scuzz characters never get lost in a crowd—they can't help calling attention to themselves and being chased. In the absence of safe hideouts, scuzzies hole up in cheap motels and other temporary digs before their next rendezvous with dead meat. In *American Strays,* the motley characters converge upon a place called Red's Desert Oasis Diner, whose name couldn't be more apt.

For scuzz is a dry-heat, desert-rat genre where the wide-open spaces offer the illusion of escape, and the legend of outlawry is imprinted onto the unnurturing landscape. Its barren stretches of sand thwart any notions of putting down roots. The blinding light of noonday becomes a screen on which one's existential impulses sinisterly play. As Albert Camus dramatized in the novel *The Stranger,* amoral impulses are emboldened under a blinding sun, which strips man down to his instincts, bleaching away gray shades of right and wrong. The animal side prevails, moral niceties shrivel, and one's choices become sharpened—reptilian. It's either eat or be eaten, kill or become roadkill. (Whereas, no matter how raggedy-ass the characters may be in an East Coast film like Nick Gomez's *New Jersey Drive,* the cityscape itself is a sociological statement that boxes them in and makes their condition a stand-in for urban squalor. Their options are blockaded by the run-down buildings around them. The same holds true for post-*Trainspotting* loserville English films such as *Shopping* and *Twin Town,* where the young hooligans seem like a toxic by-product of their scrap-heap locales.)

Perhaps the most representative scuzz film, the one-stop viewing experience that typifies the genre, is C. M. Talkington's *Love & a .45* (1994), which is set in Texas and has all of the checklist items of scuzz: tacky Vegas roadside-whorehouse décor; a robbery gone bad in which the convenience-store clerk is killed; a diner brawl in which the loser gets his hand pinned by a steak knife; young lovers in flight who document their spree with Polaroids (a preening narcissism Oliver Stone would extend into a full-blown media virus in *Natural Born Killers*); a pair of men-in-black enforcers; a titty-bar scene; a crack-smoking scene; a tattoo-parlor scene (the site of the film's T.-I.); bizarre guest appearances (Peter Fonda, speaking through an electronic voice box); and a John Woo–like standoff in which all of the characters have guns planted in each other's faces. It also has—its sole redemption—the pouty, pre–*Jerry Maguire* Renée Zellweger starring as one of the young lovers, bearing a resemblance to ex–porn star Traci Lords with her cut-off jeans and bare midriff. There's a sunny purity to her coarseness. She'll probably never look that good behaving that bad again.

> A scuzz cast acts strung out on heroin, close-knit yet nihilist



Wine, women, and bong: *Clockwise from top left,* a seedy Reese Witherspoon and Amanda Plummer in *Freeway;* Charlize Theron in *2 Days in the Valley;* serial killers Brad Pitt and Juliette Lewis in *Kalifornia*'s diner scene; Cameron Diaz seduces Ewan McGregor in *A Life Less Ordinary;* Jennifer Lopez and Sean Penn in *U-Turn;* Rebecca DeMornay smokes with scuzz fixture Michael Madsen in *The Winner.*

The outlaw couple in *Love & a .45* are Mexico-bound, like McQueen and MacGraw in *The Getaway.* This is not the usual flight route, however. Most scuzz characters are drawn to the Golden State. California looms large in scuzz not only because it is the terminus of westward flight, a dangerous paradise where dreams come to flower or ruination (the evil side of California is captured in the title of *Kalifornia,* the serial killer film that brought Brad Pitt and Juliette Lewis together), but also because it's the home of Hollywood. Scuzz fancies itself anti-Hollywood, subverting movie conventions and

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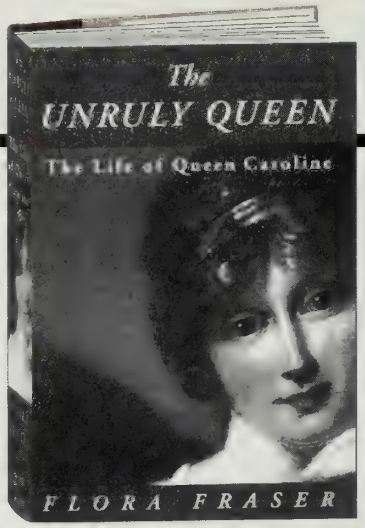


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stardom from within. A freaky example: *Freeway,* written and directed by Matthew Bright, wherein Brooke Shields trashes her goody-goody image by playing a rich, vulgar hysteric whose big hair sticks to the wall after she blows her brains out, and Reese Witherspoon, a portrait of innocence in *The Man in the Moon,* is cast as a Lolita-ish piece of trailer trash whose crack-smoking stepdad tells her, "I'm gettin' ready to take a seriously big shit right on that pointy little head of yers." (Her crack-whore mother is played by Amanda Plummer, a scary bit of casting.) A modern version of the tale of Little Red Riding Hood (the Big Bad Wolf is a psycho-killer played by Kiefer Sutherland, who ends up hideously deformed), *Freeway* aspires to be more than a shockfest—it has satirical intent. One of its executive producers was Oliver Stone, and like his *Natural Born Killers, Freeway* parodies tabloid TV, the cult of instant celebrity, and the psychobabble of dysfunction. The characters hoot and holler like guests on *Jerry Springer* in the confines of their own bombed-out living rooms. But as in *N.B.K., Freeway* pounds its points so shrilly that it becomes indistinguishable from what it's parodying, using ugliness to combat ugliness. Jokes about colostomy bags don't reflect well on anyone.

Far superior is *2 Days in the Valley,* a twisty drama which uses scuzz to supply rough edges to the *Down and Out in Beverly Hills/Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills* genre of interlocking upper-bourgeois hanky-panky. James Spader, the monotonic prince of scuzz, plays the pivotal role of a hit man without scruples or psychological affect who might have wormed his way out of the pages of *American Psycho;* the supporting cast includes Paul Mazursky (the director of *Down and Out in Beverly Hills*), Danny Aiello (whose toupee blows off when he gets shot), Eric Stoltz (him again!), Glenne Headly, Jeff Daniels, Marsha Mason, Peter Horton, Teri Hatcher, and newcomer Charlize Theron. Putting the towering, ice-creamy Theron in a white cat suit was a heavenly costuming coup, and one of the high points of 90s movies is the wall-rocking, furniture-wrecking girlfight between her and Hatcher, which propels the movie into a whole other wicked dimension. (They trade the word "bitch" back and forth as a form of foreplay and incitement.) The Theron-Hatcher rumble would have been an isolated treat had it not been for the movie's plot-driven fervor. The various story lines, loose strands at first, eventually thread together and go off like a lit fuse. A complicated roundelay of murder and betrayal, this is a movie in which everyone is in motion and on a stealth mission. That may explain why *2 Days in the Valley,* like *L.A. Confidential,* didn't attract the sizable audience it deserves. Moviegoers today may be capable of following only one thing at a time.

It might sound improbable that a gleefully decadent form like scuzz could succumb to its own decadence, but no murderous joyride lasts forever, as the fizzles of *U-Turn* and *A Life Less Ordinary* proved. In *U-Turn,* where Sean Penn finds himself stuck in a town chock-full of weirdos, Oliver Stone pockmarks his tale with so many portentous voodoo shots of animals and other grotesqueries (slobbering faces, snaggly teeth) that he's like an anthropologist on acid, wigging out on the death masks. (In *Love & a .45,* the director was content to favor us with a single close-up of a crushed armadillo. *Natural Born Killers* could be defended in principle as a defiant gesture, yet another of Oliver Stone's multiple finger-pointing indictments of America, but *U-Turn* seemed like a private theatrical, a psychedelic flashback. *A Life Less Ordinary,* which let Ewan McGregor and Cameron Diaz out to play, likewise reveled in its own outré-ness, leavening the standard kidnap scenario by introducing angels into the act. There was even, egad, a karaoke scene. A few critics applauded ("likably shapeless"—Anthony Lane, *The New Yorker*), but audiences seemed to find the combination of cuteness and bone-crunching carnage rather off-putting. When a genre doesn't respond to an injection of glamour (which McGregor and Diaz both radiate), it's effectively defunct. Scuzz films will continue to be produced—I still receive press releases on new ones—because actors and filmmakers need an excuse to horse around together on location and get paid, but scuzz's highways and back roads have been too well traveled to yield fresh atrocities or additional fragments of the shattered American Dream. Scuzz cinema is now the John Waters of movie genres, a slight reprobate whose desire to shock has sweetened into complacency. □


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AGING BULLS

Baby-boomer studio executives are feeling their years as John Travolta, Kevin Costner, and even hallowed director Steven Spielberg get creamed at the box office by teen hits such as *Scream 2*. But maturity has its advantages: Hollywood's blockbuster feuds–Geffen vs. Ovitz, Eisner vs. Katzenberg–are losing steam

BY KIM MASTERS



THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM Allegations of plagiarism involving the screenplay for *Amistad* were a nightmare for its director, DreamWorks' Steven Spielberg. And for his partner Jeffrey Katzenberg, it's been a bad dream, too.

Jane Fonda recently celebrated her 60th birthday in Atlanta with a party for about 200 friends. The festivities included a screening of a 30-minute film which the former actress had made for the occasion, a "lessons-I've-learned-in-life type thing," says a guest. Fonda offered a rendition of "Bye Bye Love" backed by her brother Peter and a ranch hand who plays guitar and is married to the honoree's cook. Fonda's husband, Ted Turner, vice-chairman of Time Warner, showed his devotion with a $10 million gift, which his wife is to use to start a foundation

For many of Hollywood's fiftysome thing baby-boomers, 60 is starting t look like a too close encounter. Is this good feeling? Not in Hollywood, wher the guard appears to be changing. Th is a climate where two teens-on-th rampage movies, *Scream 2* and *I Kno*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT RISKO



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What You Did Last Summer, outperformed Kevin Costner's *The Postman* and *Mad City* with John Travolta (and Dustin Hoffman thrown in). What's more, the movies for the kids each outgrossed the other two combined. There is nostalgia in the air for the days when the boomers reigned: in Hollywood, Fonda may have been easier to accept as Hanoi Jane than as a Gray Panther.

Some recent films starring the, um, more established actors have tanked. *Mad City*—the $50 million Travolta-and-Hoffman vehicle—grossed $11 million in its entire domestic run. Costner's disastrous *Postman,* which cost at least $80 million, squeaked out $20 million. *Scream 2* opened at $33 million. Are you sensing change?

Even the Planet Hollywood restaurant chain, struggling to avoid its last supper, seems worried about the $20 million stars it used to call its partners. Because of the chain's financial woes, Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis and Demi Moore, and 30 or so other celebrities and professional athletes now hold sadly diminished stock or potentially worthless stock options. But the company's less than sentimental president, Robert Earl, seems to imply that these celebrities, who received the stock or options in exchange for their marquee value at events, are no longer major constellations. As part of his strategy for revitalizing the faltering franchises, he announced he would look to "newer, up-and-coming stars," and dispatched executive Brian Woods, who will settle in L.A., to seek them out.

While Planet Hollywood spins off its axis, Madonna and Nicole Kidman are keeping their eyes wide open at Les Deux Cafés.

Maybe Earl should ask himself why new young stars should sign on when their elders have so little to show for all those photo ops. If Woods wants talent, perhaps he should go where the stars really meet, which is not Planet Hollywood but Les Deux Cafés, which is housed in an unmarked building in the unchic and very earthy environs of real-life Hollywood, just south of Sunset Boulevard on Las Palmas Avenue. That's where you'll find the cool crowd. Nicole Kidman threw herself a welcome-home party there after being liberated from more than a year of hard labor in England on Stanley Kubrick's kinky *Eyes Wide Shut.* (Tom Cruise, her husband, remained in custody.) And a few nights a week Madonna holds court into the wee hours. But I'm not sure that she and Mr. Woods would have much to say to each other.

Some executives were scared senseless by a new report which shows youthful audiences becoming ever more dominant. Disney's Joe Roth says that at the height of the baby boom there were 31 million teenagers in the U.S. By 2005 that figure is expected to hit 5(million. (These are Roth's figures.)

A producer sums up the boomer despair. "It's the way of the world," he says. "The people who thought there would never be another culture look around and find there *is.*" What do all these new kids want? The studios are scrambling to find out. But that may end badly. "Anytime we all start going one way . . . we do damage," says Laura Ziskin



who heads one of Fox's film divisions.

Disney, like most studios, is unabashedly foraging for youth-oriented fare. Maybe someone will pick up Adrian Lyne's *Lolita.*) "Older people are less available, more driven by critics, more insistent on movie stars," says Roth. Teens, on the other hand, shoot out of the house without the lure of $20 million games. And, Roth notes, they aren't shy about boarding *Titanic* half a dozen times. Marketing-wise, teens are cheaper to reach. "You don't have to buy spots on *Seinfeld* and *ER,*" Roth observes.

In the old days—say, last year—studios opted for safety. You went with the star no matter what the cost. Now, it seems, there aren't many names who can absolutely open a picture. Leonardo DiCaprio. Maybe Brad Pitt and Will Smith.

"I look at DiCaprio, Matt Damon—they're baby Cruises," says a studio chief. "There's this angelic, sexless thing going on. There's the image people are looking for."

At this writing, the older performers are still considered stars and are still big internationally. Warner's co-chairman Terry Semel points out that more senior stars definitely delivered some big recent hits, including *Air Force One,* which featured Harrison Ford. But, Semel says, "when they get paid those big bucks, they should do what they're famous for."

No one has relied on established stars more than Warner, which finished 1997 on an especially low note. But it's not hard to defend the studio's decisions. Take *Mad City.* When Warner approached John Travolta, it wanted him to play the opportunistic reporter who covers a distraught security guard desperate to get his job back.

The studio saw the journalist as the money role; the guard could have been played by a far less important (i.e., less expensive) actor. But Travolta wanted to play the guard. That changed the complexion of the film; Warner needed a strong presence in the reporter's role, which meant writing a check to Dustin Hoffman. The picture's budget climbed to about $50 million. But how many executives would really turn down a chance to cast Travolta? Probably none.

Costner and *The Postman*? Well, Costner's only other directing effort was *Dances with Wolves*—which logged a $424 million gross. Now Semel is consoling himself with memories of how much money Warner made on Costner outings such as *Robin Hood* and *The Bodyguard.*

Semel wasn't seated at Ted and Jane's table at the Fonda birthday party, and, given reports that Turner is unhappy with the Warner co-chairman (all emphatically denied by Semel), that's no surprise. It's easy to understand Turner's frustration, what with the bad news at the box office. (On a happier note, Warner's television business is good; the studio will pick up $330 million in *ER* money from NBC over the next three years.)

Almost every industry pundit agrees that something has to give on the movie side. Some are beginning to speculate that Semel won't stick around indefinitely, though he says he will. Warner without Semel is hard to imagine, but the executive's friends say it could happen. "He must be sick of Ted's shit," says one. "He must be embarrassed. I think he's rich enough." (He certainly doesn't need Turner to give him the money to start his foundation.)

For nearly 18 years, the Bob Daly–Terry Semel relationship has been one of Hollywood's more opaque pairings. But it has worked. Daly, now the industry's elder statesman, is generally respected as

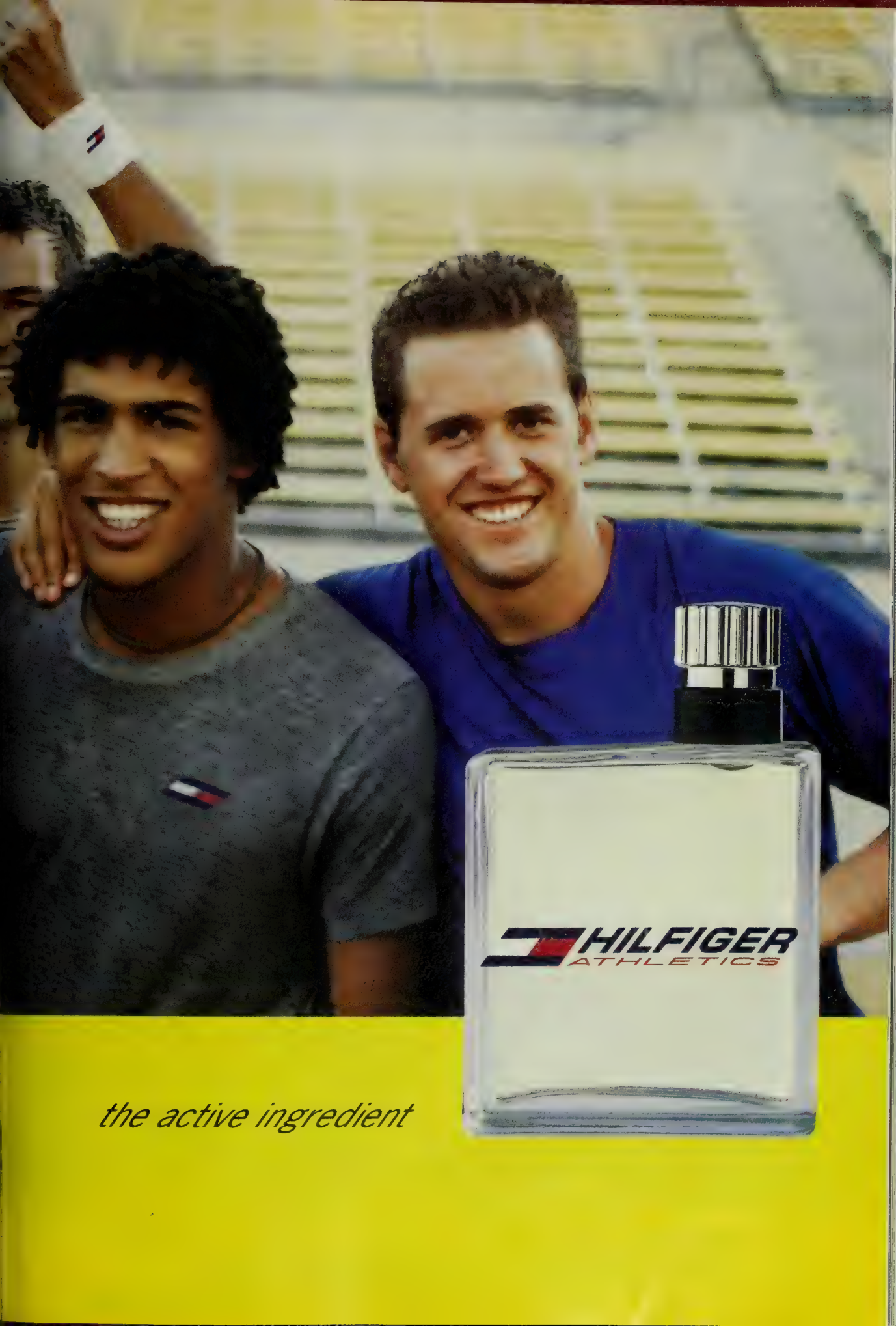




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a savvy businessman whose television expertise has kept Warner on top. Semel is much harder to pin down. He's notorious for not returning calls—a trait that even friends don't try to defend. "It's a horrible way to function," says one. "It's rude. I can't explain him to anybody."

But many make the point that Semel is the industry expert on distribution and is also a shrewd marketeer. And he has always been a successful schmoozer of stars. ("He spends money freely and that makes him good with talent," says one high-level executive.)

Turner isn't likely to be appeased anytime soon. *Sphere,* the Michael Crichton–inspired undersea adventure, which starred Dustin Hoffman, Sharon Stone, and Samuel Jackson, was nothing but trouble. Warner began construction of a multimillion-dollar set, then demolished it after discovering that the specifications were wrong. Eventually the budget topped $100 million. Then the film's opening was delayed from December to February. In January, director Barry Levinson had to go back for eleventh-hour reshoots, which, unfortunately, didn't help.

Warner's big hope for the summer is now *Lethal Weapon 4,* which could work but won't come cheap, what with Mel Gibson, Danny Glover, Joe Pesci, and Rene Russo all back. The studio agreed to "young up" the production a bit by adding Chris Rock to the cast (despite the skepticism of Daly and Semel). But industry expectations aren't great; as a high-level executive at a competing studio puts it, "Anything with a numeral that large after it has got to feel like: Is this a good idea?"

Warner is holding out more hope for the end of the year, when Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks reteam in *You Have Mail,* directed by Nora Ephron, and Costner returns as a romantic lead in *Message in a Bottle.* But, meanwhile, Warner appears to have missed opportunities in its own Burbank backyard. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is on the WB network, but its star, Sarah Michelle Gellar, is making movies elsewhere. Jewel croons on a Warner Music label, but she's making a big-screen debut for another studio. The problem, says a Warner veteran, is that Daly and Semel find it hard to listen to new ideas. If you're not as young as you used to be, he says, "you should be smart enough to let the people you've hired do their work." The studio may have gotten the message; Warner is courting *Scream*'s Neve Campbell for *Three to Tango.*

Warner's bad news did drown out the drumbeats about DreamWorks (industry joke: "Stop dreamin' and start workin'!"). There are reports that Steven Spielberg, one of the company's three founders, went into quite a funk after *Amistad* failed to win more critical acclaim, box-office bang, and Oscar nominations. Apparently he believes—as do other executives and agents—that the film was hurt by the negative publicity surrounding author Barbara Chase-Riboud's now resolved suit alleging that the script was cribbed from her novel *Echo of Lions.* And Spielberg, who has braved these sorts of charges before, is said to be laying some blame on his partner Jeffrey Katzenberg, who, the director believes, should have made the litigation go away.

Strangely enough, court papers filed by Chase-Riboud's lawyer Pierce O'Donnell (who won a partial victory for Art Buchwald when he sued Paramount for lifting some of his work) suggest that Katzenberg tried to do just that—at least initially. O'Donnell told the court that back in February 1997, before the suit was filed, Katzenberg phoned to say that he wanted to avoid a public-relations battle. According to O'Donnell, Katzenberg used the word "amicable"



repeatedly and said, "I have an olive branch in my hand." Katzenberg also said that Spielberg was sensitive to these types of claims, so it was important "not to back Steven into a corner . . . if Steven feels his integrity is being questioned, he will turn the claim over to his lawyers and tell them to fight to the death."

After that, things went downhill. O'Donnell demanded money, screen credit, and help publishing a paperback of *Echo of Lions* to be pegged to the movie. O'Donnell filed the suit in October, eliciting a very hostile response from DreamWorks lawyer Bert Fields, who said that in an effort to "grab money for herself" Chase-Riboud was essentially betraying her people by attacking Spielberg's project.

"What in the world were they thinking, making Bert Fields their heavy-handed, ironfisted spokesman?" asks a prominent producer with amazement. "The whole thing was bizarre to watch, like a slow-motion car crash." But Fields expresses no regrets and says he was following orders. "I was the truth squad," he says.

While DreamWorks was insisting that no one associated with *Amistad* had ever even heard of Chase-Riboud's book, O'Donnell got what seemed to be quite a break. A writer named Benjamin Pettis called Chase-Riboud's lawyers to impart some choice information: starting in 1993, *Echo of Lions* was under option at Dustin Hoffman's Punch Productions. The writer attached was David Franzoni—the very same David Franzoni who subsequently wrote the *Amistad* script. Franzoni admitted that he had been given a copy of the novel and that he had pitched the project at Warner. But he denied having read the book. (O'Donnell argued to the court that it was "highly suspect" that Franzoni would pitch a project based on a book he hadn't read—which shows how much O'Donnell knows about Hollywood.)

"If Steven Spielberg feels his integrity is being questioned," Katzenberg said, "he will turn the claim over to his lawyers and tell them to fight to the death."

When the case was finally settled—an option that DreamWorks maintains it would have pursued in the first place except for Chase-Riboud's insistence on a movie credit—the publicity had taken its toll. Terms were not disclosed, though the novelist acknowledged Spielberg's innocence. The settlement was made public the day before the Oscar nominations were announced. (*Amistad* got three nominations—including Best Supporting Actor—but none in the big categories.)

Some in Hollywood argue that this flap hurt the picture; others claim that *Amistad* simply wasn't going to work no matter what. Both are probably right.

Spielberg, according to a colleague, "booked out in a big way" over the Christmas holiday, to Easthampton—far from the madding show-business crowd in Hawaii. "He was very upset," says his associate. "It's just human nature." So it wasn't only that Spielberg wouldn't take Katzenberg's calls, this insider in-





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THE GOOD SHIP TWENTYSOMETHING Kevin Costner and other baby-boomer stars aren't delivering, while Leonardo DiCaprio (*Titanic*), Will Smith (*Men in Black*), and Matt Damon (*Good Will Hunting*) are sending teen audiences to the box office special express.

"DiCaprio, Matt Damon—they're baby Cruises," says a studio chief. "There's the image people are looking for."

sts; he didn't want to talk to anyone. When things don't work for Steven, e is irrational," says an executive who as worked with him. "These aren't ng-lasting things. He'll blame Jeffrey, mself, the marketing people, critics, d Barbara Chase-Riboud."

One has to have some sympathy for l the parties here. Spielberg has been n an unlucky roll. He missed the pre-iere of DreamWorks' first movie, *The acemaker,* when he and his wife, Kate apshaw, were involved in a car accident. eanwhile, he was allegedly stalked by a an with some very unsavory fantasies about raping and killing him. Then he got sued over *Amistad* while genuinely believing, according to his own account, that he was doing perhaps the most important work of his career.

In the midst of all this, Spielberg prevailed in another lawsuit, filed by writer Stephen Kessler, who charged that Spielberg and Michael Crichton had swiped the idea for *Twister.* Spielberg's lawyers tried to get that case tossed out of court, but the judge found substantial similarities between the *Twister* script and Kessler's screenplay. So the famous director had to go to St. Louis in January to testify. On the stand, he argued, mysteriously, that the script accounted for only 5 percent of *Twister*'s success. By his math, the action and special effects accounted for 60 percent, Helen Hunt for 20 percent, and sound effects for 10 percent. This is pretty precise for a guy who testified that he didn't know exactly how much money he made from the film.

Why didn't anyone talk Spielberg out of this strange statement? Sources say the director lives in a privileged world. Nobody wants to deliver bad news. Katzenberg says the Chase-Riboud suit

was "a genuine annoyance" but nothing more; he's also willing to accept the blame for the failure to defuse the litigation. "I took it upon myself . . . to be the focal point of whatever second-guessing might go on," he says. "It's my job."

But not everything is a bummer for Spielberg. There's good buzz on *Saving Private Ryan,* his summer movie with Tom Hanks and young potential megastar Matt Damon (actually, DreamWorks will get only half of the film's take; it had to split the project with Paramount, which owned the property). And Spielberg can always console himself with the new deal for *ER,* co-produced by his company, Amblin Entertainment, which will earn about $110 million. For everyone but NBC, *ER* was like a big three-year relief package. DreamWorks should have it so good.

"Steven was very upset," says a Spielberg associate, of *Amistad*'s failure. "When things don't work for Steven, he is irrational," says another executive.

Spielberg's pique with Katzenberg was, according to the claims of one member of Jeffrey's camp, no more than "a mosquito bite." And some other feuds may be losing their sting. David Geffen, the third DreamWorks partner, recently broke bread with Barry Diller and old foe Michael Ovitz at Locanda Veneta. Geffen, however, dismisses the meal as an impromptu non-event. He says that Diller was dining with Ovitz, and he tagged along at the last minute. When *Variety* reported the meeting, Geffen was quick to take offense, thinking that Ovitz was the leak. (He was mollified when he found out otherwise.)

Both Ovitz and his other nemesis, Disney chieftain Michael Eisner (who fired the former CAA titan from the Magic Kingdom), were in Aspen over the holidays. Ovitz entertained Disney board member Gary Wilson, chairman of Northwest Airlines, with whom he also happens to own a yacht named *Illusion.* But certain chasms are not ready to be bridged. Although the Eisners and Ovitzes used to take turns entertaining on Christmas and New Year's, attempts were made this year to prevent the two Michaels from crossing paths. One informant says Eisner tried to approach Ovitz through a friendly third party but was rebuffed; Eisner's response, as we hear it, was bafflement. "It was just business," he reportedly said of Ovitz's departure from Disney. "It didn't work out. He got $100 million. What's the big deal?"

Eisner has made some sort of peace with DreamWorks, having agreed to pay Katzenberg an undetermined sum to settle the former Disney executive's suit over his share of profits earned during his years at the studio. Eisner made the trek to visit sometime adversary David Geffen at his beach house—not exactly neutral territory—to smooth things over. Now Katzenberg and Eisner are even talking about teaming up on future projects. (Some of this goodwill may dissipate now that Disney has moved its big summer movie *Mighty Joe Young,* with Bill Paxton, to next Christmas, right up against *Prince of Egypt,* the source of DreamWorks' most animated hopes.) Geffen, as noted, has had a peaceable meal with Ovitz, but stay tuned. Ovitz has a way to go before he's in the good graces of the rest of the town. He's been out and about a bit more, making a rare appearance recently at the premiere of *Wag the Dog.* Not everyone was excited to see him. "It was like a blast of ice-cold air," says one prominent producer. "Nothing has changed."

Meanwhile, the Ovitz-Geffen-Diller détente has fueled already-ferocious talk over the future of Universal. Recall that Edgar Bronfman Jr. has sold Diller the better part of the studio's television operations; some have speculated that Diller will soon take over the entire entertainment company. But those in the know say Diller could have had the whole thing but doesn't want to mess with the lousy margins in the movie business. Bronfman himself says he would have drafted Diller to run Universal long ago except that he knew Diller's agenda, "and what he wanted to accomplish had nothing to do with working for me."

So now Diller presides over the new USA Networks, Inc. (Home Shopping Network, most of Ticketmaster, 12 TV stations, USA Network, and Sci-Fi Channel, as well as Universal's television production operations). Universal owns 45 percent of the company. Diller calls the shots (but needs Bronfman's approval for major moves) and stands to make a fortune on stock options.

Some in the industry are curious what Bronfman will do with what's left of Universal—including Sid Sheinberg, who used to be president of the company when it was called MCA. Like other observers, he concludes that the Diller deal "emasculated" chief executive Frank Biondi by getting rid of television and cable—Biondi's supposed strong suits—and left the company with movies, "a shitty business." Sheinberg figures the only thing left to do is give the company to Diller. "It's got to be the end of the road," he says. "It's just a question of when." But Bronfman says the company has more than just the movie business—specifically, music, a big library, and plans to be Disney's biggest rival in the destination-resort business.

Another popular scenario has Bronfman splitting Universal into a company separate from its parent, the Seagram Company Ltd. As one Wall Street analyst observes, many believe that Seagram stock would be as high as $80 per share if the company had just kept its hefty stake in Dupont (which it sold just as it bought Universal). Meanwhile, the stock hangs around $35, about where it was three years ago. Analysts, however, acknowledge that the company may be undervalued because entertainment analysts don't get the liquor business.

But Bronfman says he doesn't want to split Universal from Seagram. "My job isn't to make life easier for analysts," he says. "My job is to deliver the results they expect." He points out that the transaction with Diller has already made Seagram about $800 million richer on paper thanks to the value of its share in Diller's company ("I don't consider that chopped liver," says Bronfman). He also notes that Universal—which had all but written off television as a business when he bought it—can acquire a majority stake in USA Networks when Diller leaves or dies. "Barry's views notwithstanding, one of those two things will happen eventually," Bronfman says cheerfully. And, he adds, he can wait.

Another notion conjured up over paranoid lunches these days is that the Ovitz-Geffen rapprochement was part of a Diller scheme to insert Ovitz into the top job at Universal, which would have been Ovitz's in 1995 if he hadn't gotten greedy in his contract negotiations. The view is that Diller would then have a close ally running Universal, which is now closely associated with his own company. Getting Ovitz into the job would be an amazing feat, con

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Gibson Super 400, 1934



Rickenbacker Electro Spanish, 1937



Epiphone Emperor, 1949



Grady Martin Bigsby Double-Neck, 1952



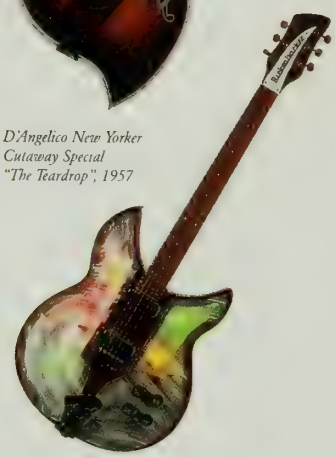
D'Angelico New Yorker Cutaway Special "The Teardrop", 1957



Gibson Explorer, 1958



Fender Stratocaster,® 1964



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STAR 60
Ted Turner marked wife Jane Fonda's 60th with $10 million to start her own foundation. At the party Jane sang "Bye Bye Love" with her brother Peter and the Turners' ranch hand.

"The people who thought there would never be another culture find there *is*."

sidering the depth of Edgar junior's disgust with Ovitz after the failed negotiation three years ago. In fact, Bronfman says the chances are "somewhere between zero and nil."

Diller also scoffs at the rumors. "We have a company with a market capitalization of about $8 billion which is the fourth-largest cable programmer and the sixth-largest broadcast group. Why can't people say there is no next step other than the development of our assets?"

Some stories end happily. *Titanic* could gross about $1 billion worldwide, making it the biggest hit ever. "Relief has turned to joy," says Tom Rothman, president of Fox film production.

The going joke was that Peter Chernin (who green-lighted the film before he was promoted and left it to Bill Mechanic, his successor as head of production) would emerge from his new post at News Corp.—Fox's parent company—if the film scored. Sure enough, there was a skirmish at the Golden Globes. Chernin tried to take Mechanic's place at the *Titanic* table. The matter was resolved when the men left the table to director James Cameron and the film's stars.

So Fox has won, and Paramount, with its $65 million investment in the picture, has won, too. (Fox says it gets 60 percent after both sides recoup costs, but don't be surprised if the partners end up fighting over the cash.) But the rest of the industry could ultimately lose. A very A-list director has stated that nothing he demands should be considered unreasonable in light of Cameron's budget. And one entertainment-company chairman notes with dread that the picture's three-hour and-fourteen-minute length will set a new diabolical standard. Now, "no matter what it costs, no matter how long it is," he says directors will insist that size is good.

Cameron should perhaps also get credit for anticipating the youth wave. "Jim was always determined that the lovers be young," Rothman says. But did anyone expect him to cast Jane Fonda? □

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What Lulu Wanted

In 1928, screen siren Louise Brooks walked out on Paramount to star in two daringly sensual films in Berlin. They made her a movie legend, but ended her Hollywood career. Eight years before her death in 1985, she held forth on sex, the studios, and close friends Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin

BY TOM DARDIS

Louise Brooks's b look of false inno epitomized the Ja her peak in 1928 pageboy and ban was a favorite su of Hollywood phot E. R. Richee.

In 1977, as I was beginning a biography of Buster Keaton, the British film historian Kevin Brownlow told me that I should speak to Louise Brooks. Louise, he said, was certain to tell me all about Buster's relations with women and might give me an insider's view of the reasons for his decline into obscurity. One of her Hollywood lovers had been William "Buster" Collier Jr., a now forgotten leading man who in the 20s was one of Keaton's best male friends. Brownlow was convinced that Louise could recall for me better than anyone what Keaton was like in the days of his great fame.

Brownlow had visited Brooks in her tiny apartment in Rochester, New York, where she led a secluded life enlivened by writing extraordinary articles for esoteric film journals, which were collecte in 1982 as *Lulu in Hollywood*. The art cles revealed a unique sensibility and i timate knowledge of Hollywood an Berlin in the last days of the silents.

The girl with the sleek black hair c in bangs and the bewitching look of fal innocence epitomized the Jazz Age ar the new sexual freedom of the 1920s. A a 19-year-old CONTINUED ON PAGE 1

ndependent thinkers

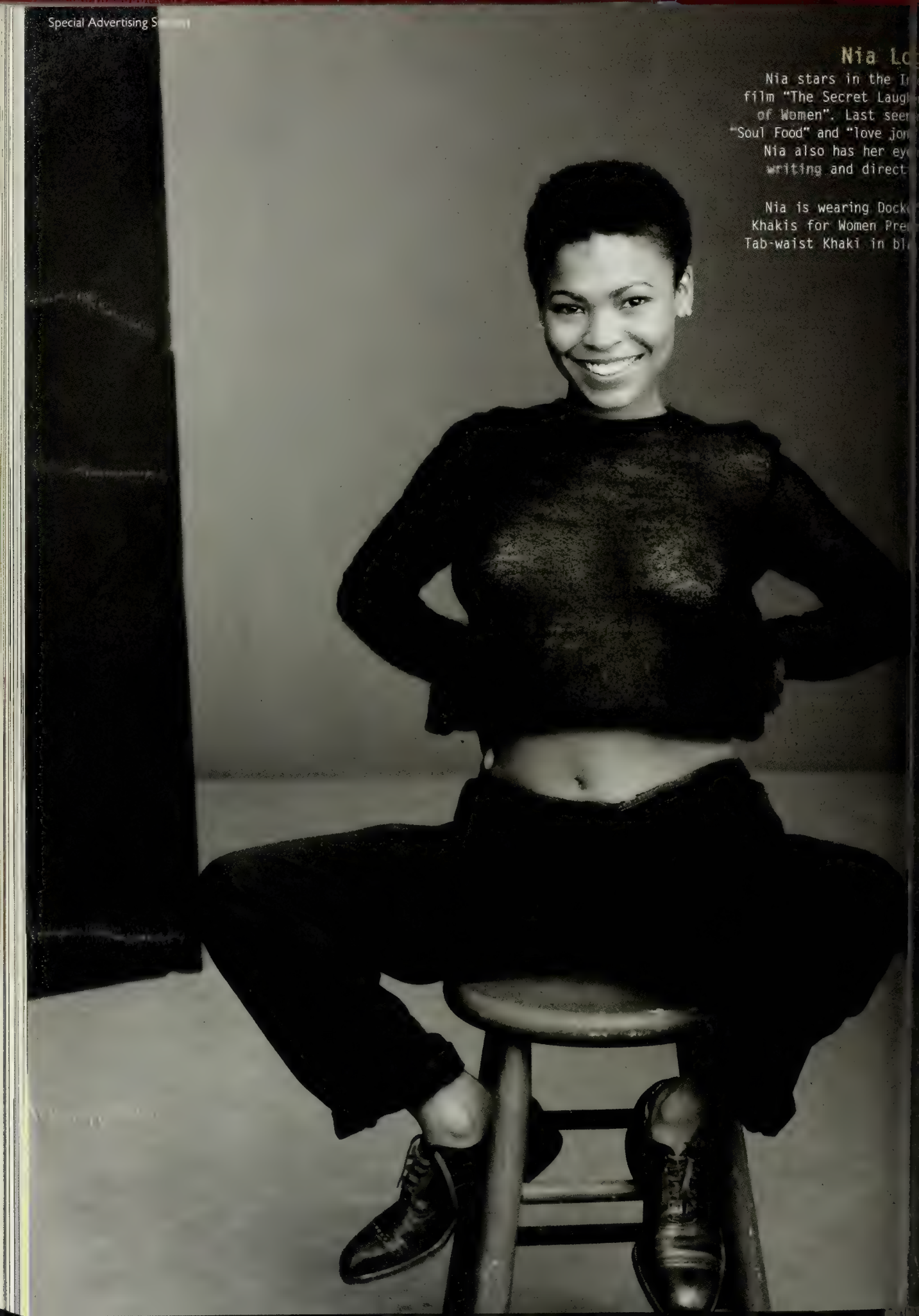
om Sundance to Manhattan, everyone is talking about the Indie film. **Dockers® Khakis Women** celebrates the Indie, and nine actresses who embody its pioneering spirit. ause Dockers believes in the confidence and creativity it takes to make a vision reality. Here, the actresses show their personal style by topping off their **Dockers akis for Women** with some favorite things from their own closets.



atchen Mol

gen can be seen he Indie films "Too d To Die" with Mira ino and "The Last I Committed Suicide". also appears in Woody n's current project, stars in MGM's ntic comedy "Music Another Room".

chen is wearing ers® Khakis for Women tch Khaki in khaki.



Nia Lo

Nia stars in the I
film "The Secret Laug
of Women". Last seer
"Soul Food" and "love jon
Nia also has her ey
writing and direct

Nia is wearing Dock
Khakis for Women Pre
Tab-waist Khaki in bl



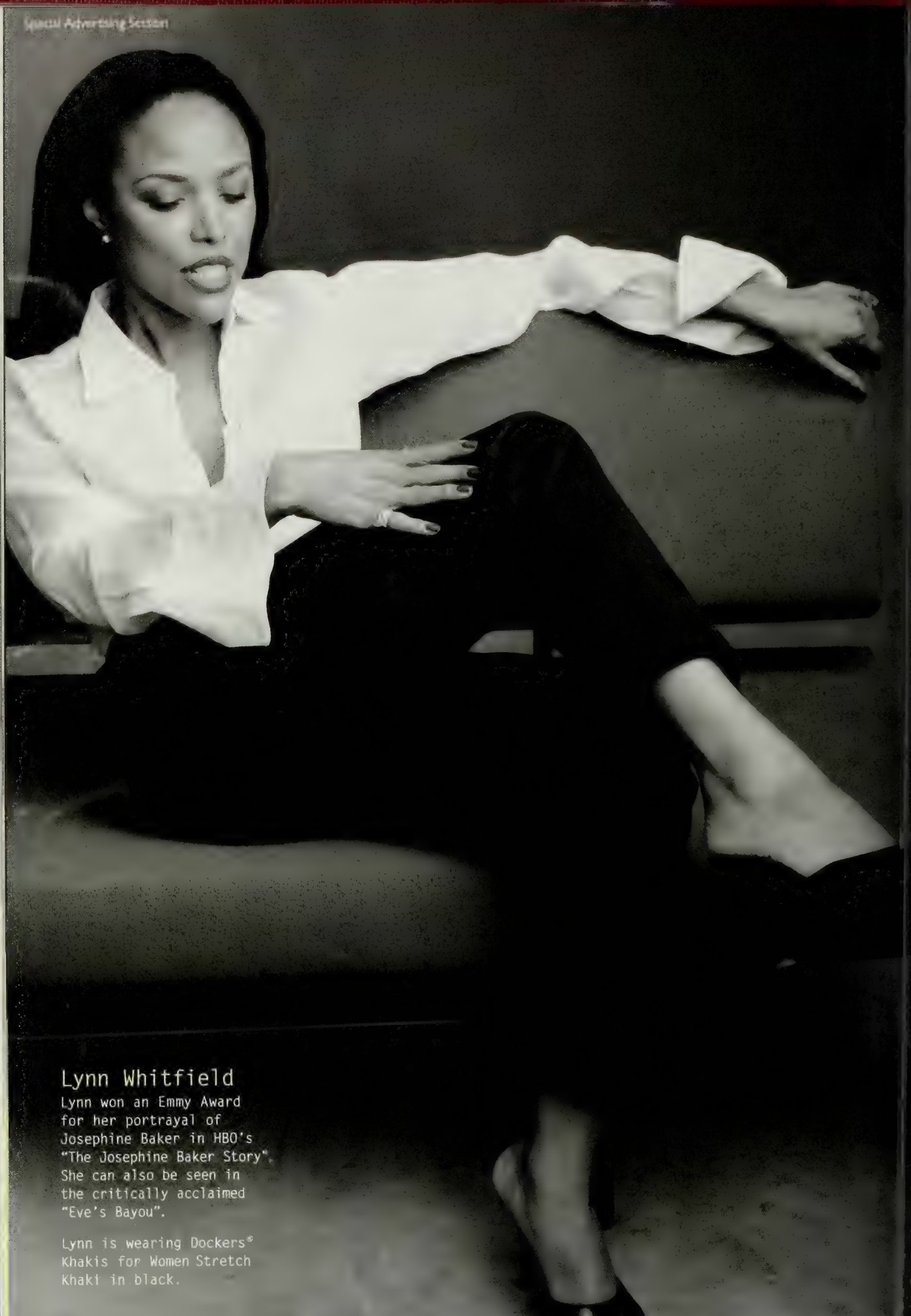
in Phoenix

, who has appeared in
Van Sant's "Even
girls Get the Blues"
"To Die For", completed
Indie films this year,
Woke Up Early the Day
ied" and "Spent".

mmer Phoenix

mer's Indie film
fits include: "Arresting
", "I Woke Up Early
Day I Died" with
er Rain, "Girl", and
.C. Punk".

and Summer are both
ing Dockers® Khaki
Women Premium Tab-waist
in black.



Lynn Whitfield

Lynn won an Emmy Award for her portrayal of Josephine Baker in HBO's "The Josephine Baker Story". She can also be seen in the critically acclaimed "Eve's Bayou".

Lynn is wearing Dockers® Khakis for Women Stretch Khaki in black.



ai Ling

stage and screen star
her native China, and
former member of the
nese Army. Bai Ling has
eared in "The Crow",
e Wedding Banquet", and
xon". Her most recent film
the thriller "The Red
ner" with Richard Gere.

Ling is wearing
kers® Khakis for Women
mium Single-pleat Khaki
Khaki.

Georgina Cates

Georgina, alumni of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and Oxford School of Drama, co-stars with John Turturro and Susan Sarandon in "Illuminata" and with Vince Vaughn and Joaquin Phoenix in "Clay Pigeons".

Georgina is wearing Dockers® Khakis for Women Flat-front Khaki in doeskin.





ia Argento

taly's hottest young
ess. Asia has also
ared in "Queen Margot",
will soon be a
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Rupert Everett and
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Festival's winner "I
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Foundation's Film Fini
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DOCKERS

ONTINUED FROM PAGE 174 Ziegfeld *Fol-es* dancer, Brooks signed a Paramount ontract that led her to Hollywood, where he would come to count Keaton, W. C. ields, John Gilbert, and Clara Bow mong her friends. In 1928 she dared the ightning by walking out on her contract o make two films in Berlin (*Pandora's ox* and *The Diary of a Lost Girl*) with ie great German director G. W. Pabst. A eavily censored *Pandora's Box* ran only riefly in American theaters—and *The Di-ry of a Lost Girl* not at all—but Brooks's erformances became legendary. Her defi-nce of the Hollywood system effectively estroyed her career in America. When she egan publishing film studies in the 1950s nd 60s and granting interviews to writers ich as Kenneth Tynan and Christopher herwood, she became an icon. Brooks's iercing intelligence, combined with a sav-ge wit, brought the 20s to life and stirred iterest in the two remarkable silent films ie had made with Pabst, which are now idely shown. She became a "star," in ct, 30 years after making her final film.

Following a few tentative phone calls, ouise Brooks and I began a correspon-ence that continued for two years. What arted slowly became a steady stream of tters from her, as many as two or three a week, some running on for six pages more, all written, she claimed, to ensure at I "would get it right" and not produce nother of those hateful Hollywood bios people who know nothing of the era.

She began with the problem of lan-uage, of how people really lked in the 20s, finding that ost contemporary writers ere guilty of distortion:

beg you not to pad your ook . . . with invented dia-gue made "real authentic" "fucks" and "shits." . . . I l you truthfully this has en invented by the Heming-y he-men such as [the director] Billy ellman—and writers who fill empty ges with the stuff. Up to 1940 when I t Hollywood *no* man swore before wom-, and [Carole] Lombard was the only man who got away with it. I never ore before 1943—disgusting habit—ugly, eaningless—God damn it.

arly on in our correspondence Louise warned me of the dangers involved in speculating about a subject dear to ost modern biographers:

an effort to solve a non-existent mys-y I hope you don't mess with Buster's life—this is what my darling Sam nson said in *Lives of the Poets*—about len who cannot bear to think them-selves ignorant of that which, at last, neither diligence nor sagacity can discover."

Within a few months, however, she became far more frank and personal:

I cannot resist MY subject, SEX, and pouring out my wisdom although I know no one can know of others' sexual pleasures—and pains, not even of those we go to bed with—another partner, another performance. Indeed I do not even know my own, for I have rid myself of a good lay as fast as a bad one.

But last year, as I itemize everything, I made a rough count of how many men I've been to bed with. At a modest 10 a year from 17 to 60 it would come to 430. Therefore I feel competent to make some guesses about Keaton. (What a pity I did not know you were going to write a book—I would have researched him. 431.)

Buster was very sexy, very relaxed and easy with women—the first sign of a man secure in his performance. I think he was capable of love but like me he was possessed rather than choosing to possess. (I married [film director] Eddie Sutherland who bored me in bed, and [Chicago socialite] Deering Davis who was repulsive to me.) . . . Sex never influenced the decisions that shaped Keaton's life.

In addition to supplying me with her impressions of Keaton's sexuality, Louise offered contrasting testimony about Charlie Chaplin, with whom she had spent most of the summer of 1925 in New York. Chaplin was in town for the opening of *The Gold Rush*. He was glad to be away from California, where his marriage to Lita Grey had become oppressive. He was worried, however, that he was being shadowed by employees of newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst, who believed that Chaplin had had an affair with Hearst's mistress, Marion Davies.

We would begin an evening (1925) in his suite at the Ambassador [Hotel] in New York—he would give a series of hilarious imitations for me, Peggy Fears, A. C. Blumenthal, Jack Pickford and Winfield Sheehan [all celebrities at the time—showgirl, financier, Mary Pickford's brother, and the production head of Fox Films]. Then Jack and Winnie would leave and Charlie would become the hunted man, seeking Blumie's advice about the detectives he felt sure Mr. Hearst had on his trail. . . .

Then Blumie and Peggy would leave and Charlie would go into his seduction scene with me. He had his sexes mixed up. Instead of playing the lazy, watchful tom cat (like Keaton) he rolled and slithered and rubbed like the lady cat. This was a technique suitable only for innocent little girls. (Men's choice of women is always determined by the success of their particular love-play.) [Silent-film actress Pola] Negri wanted publicity, Davies wanted fun—[actress] Peggy Joyce and [Chaplin's third wife, Paulette] Goddard were whoring for stardom.

Brooks then noted Charles Dickens's passion for young girls.

In 1836 when Dickens married Kate Hogarth (20) he brought sister Mary (16),



Brooks as an incorruptible innocent in *The Diary of a Lost Girl* (1929), the second of the two silent masterpieces she made in Berlin with the German director G. W. Pabst.



Some men in Brooks's life, *clockwise from top left:* Charlie Chaplin (lover), Buster Keaton (friend), Man Ray (admirer), Christopher Isherwood (interviewer), Robert Benchley (drinking buddy), G. W. Pabst (director).

"Up to 1940 *no* man swore before women, and Carole Lombard was the only woman who got away with it."

whom he really loved, to live with them. When Mary died in 1837 he nearly lost his mind. Upon reading *The Old Curiosity Shop* 1840–41, old lady Hogarth [Kate and Mary's mother] made him laugh when she said he didn't fool her—he was Quilp and Mary was Little Nell. (Nabokov used this allusion [Quilty] in *Lolita.*) . . .

I am peculiarly interested in this subject because I was "molested" at 9 by Mr. Flowers in Cherryvale [her hometown in Kansas], and, although this perversion is as common today as it was when Ruskin and Lewis Carroll were on the prowl, the lips of the victims and their mothers are sealed. We alone would have made *Lolita* a best seller in spite of the fact that Nabokov, the dirty rat, made Lolita the seducer.

Louise had much to say about drinking—her own and that of many of her friends in Hollywood.

I never appreciated how lucky I was to have been able to get drunk with the cleverest minds in the world (even if I never heard Bob Benchley say anything funny). . . . I assumed that everyone got drunk as I did and fell apart after 4 drinks. Fitzgerald was an example of that—"You can't write on gin." But . . . booze was the magic potion that opened the door to [Faulkner's] secret world. . . . Proust too wrote on massive doses of drugs. Genius apparently possesses a power of control and management of drugs unknown to doctors and psychiatrists. Keaton lost this power when he was driven out of his "unique world" and caged in the MGM Zoo.

I soon noticed that Louise needed no urging to discuss literature. Indeed, she often preferred it to film talk. Too many of her visitors, she complained, were simply "movie nuts," who thought of not much else. She told me that William Randolph Hearst had caught her stretched out on one of his huge billiard tables at San Simeon, reading Aldous Huxley's 1923 novel, *Antic Hay.*

She was sensitive about being identified as someone who read difficult books. She recalled an incident in 1958 when she encountered the German film critic Lotte Eisner in Paris, where Brooks was given a month of *hommage* at the *Cinémathèque Française.* Eisner liked to introduce Brooks by citing her reading tastes.

And inevitably she would say, "Louise reads Proust," exhibiting me as the prize dunce beautiful actress in the manner of a pony counting to ten with a hoof beat. . . . One night Lotti [*sic*] and I went to Man Ray's where he was entertaining a strange couple who had come to look at his paintings. Sure enough Lotti said "Louise reads Proust," and I was inspired to re-enact Keaton's comedy strangling scene [in which Keaton places his hands on the throat of his beloved after he sees her rejecting some of the scarce firewood in favor of more aesthetically pleasing twigs for his engine in *The General*]. "God damn you, Lotti, if you say that again I'll kill you," I said, grabbing her by the throat, shaking her lightly, then letting go with a laugh. However, I failed to express Keaton's corrective sweetness. Lotti was frightened and the strangers left thinking I should be locked up.

Louise was a woman of intense, even violent feelings about the people she met in New York and Hollywood. In her letters she heaped withering scorn on her favorite targets—Marlene Dietrich, the writer Anita Loos, and Joseph Schenck, who produced all of Keaton's silent films.

[Schenck] was generous with money and mink coats. . . . He must have been all powerful in negotiating Fox contracts. One night at Arrowhead Springs (1939?) I watched him dance the rumba (and damned good) for 2 hours with [Sonja Henie who would not have wasted a single wiggle of her ass on a man who didn't spell money.

When I argued with Brooks about some of her objects of loathing, feeling that she must be overstating her case, she replied:

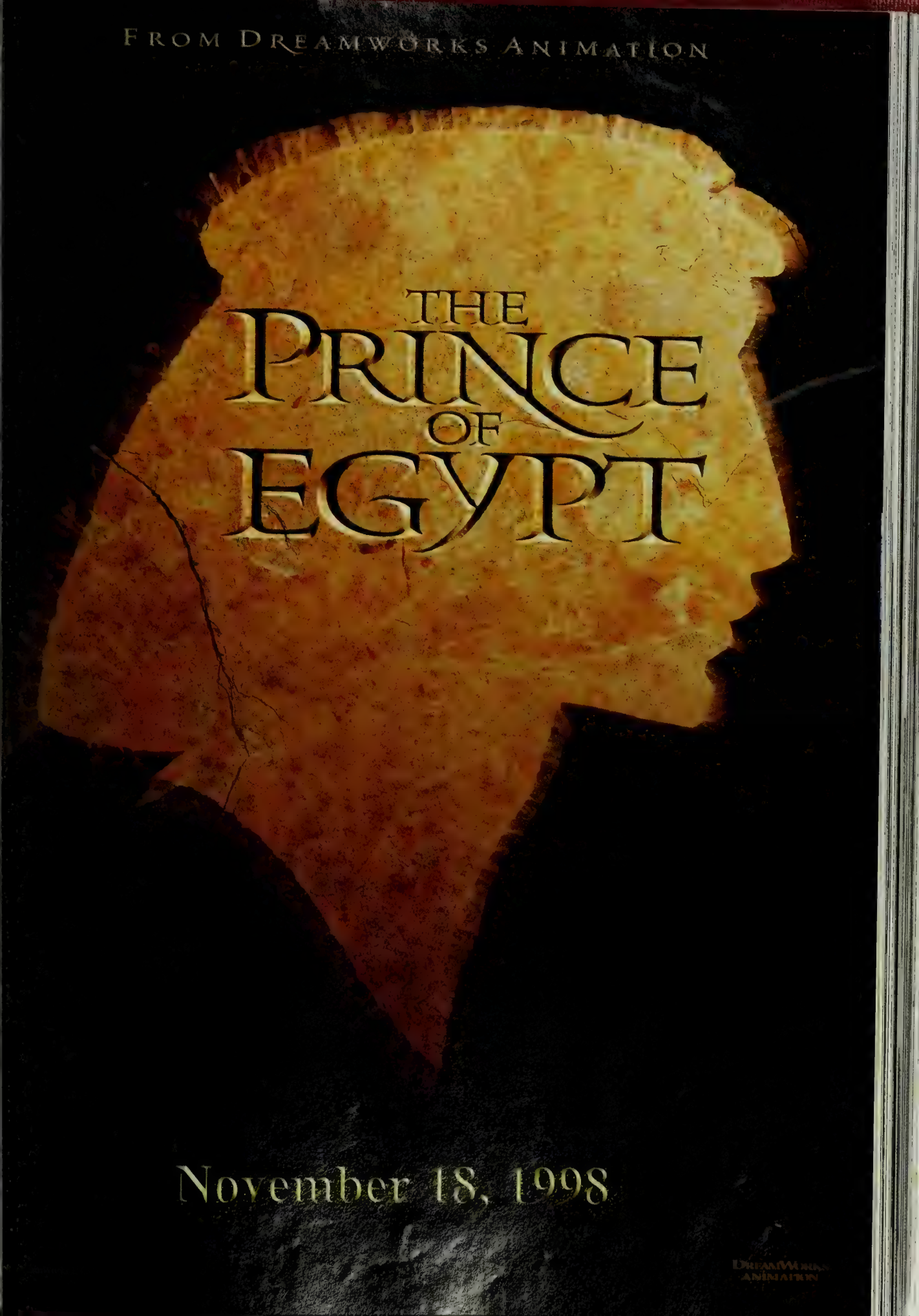
Yes, I am a violent woman. I had counted on old age, loss of energy, and arthritis to cool me out. . . . What makes the midget ego Loos so poisonous is that as film fans believe her—"she was *there.*" Her poison extends to endless talk shows and interviews. Moving farther and farther from fact and truth towards soap opera.

Brooks was particularly incensed by the tendency of some of Hollywood's old timers to "recall" events that never occurred. She thought that Loos and director Howard Hawks had begun to believe their own stories:

They lie, invent, glorify themselves. Kevin [Brownlow] told me that Howard Hawks actually told him [that] *I dived 75 feet into a tank of water* in *A Girl in Every Port.*

It may well be that after nearly half a century Hawks genuinely believed

FROM DREAMWORKS ANIMATION



he'd seen Louise obey his command to take that dive.

I soon had trouble keeping up my side of the correspondence and decided that it was time to pay a visit to Rochester, where in March 1977 I found an often bedridden recluse who was as voluble in the flesh as on paper. She was suffering from an arthritic hip condition and the effects of steadily worsening emphysema. Her pain was often extreme, but it did not interfere with her incessant letter writing, telephoning, and reading. She did all her own cooking, and that first day she prepared a wonderful egg dish. When I later complimented her on the omelette, her reply was characteristic. I hadn't gotten it right! The dish she had served that day, she informed me, was scrambled eggs, most certainly not an omelette.

Louise was stoic about her exile in upstate New York. She had gone there in 1956, after what she described as "various methods of self-destruction," beginning with her walking out on her Paramount contract. The Hollywood of the 1930s had taken its revenge by offering her a series of bit parts in undistinguished films—a stark contrast to her earlier, starring roles. Rochester, however, was at least the home of the George Eastman collection of old films, a sort of American *cinémathèque,* which her champion and lover James Card had assembled. It was at Eastman House that she began her film research on Lillian Gish, G. W. Pabst, Greta Garbo, and Humphrey Bogart, and the writing of her essays, which were published in *Positif, Sight and Sound,* and *Film Culture.* These brought visitors to her from all over the world:

"Last year I made a rough count of how many men I've been to bed with. At a modest 10 a year, it would come to 430."



In 1927, the year before Brooks left Hollywood to go to Berlin, she played twins—one German, one French—in *Now We're in the Air,* a comedy directed by Frank Strayer, co-starring Wallace Beery.

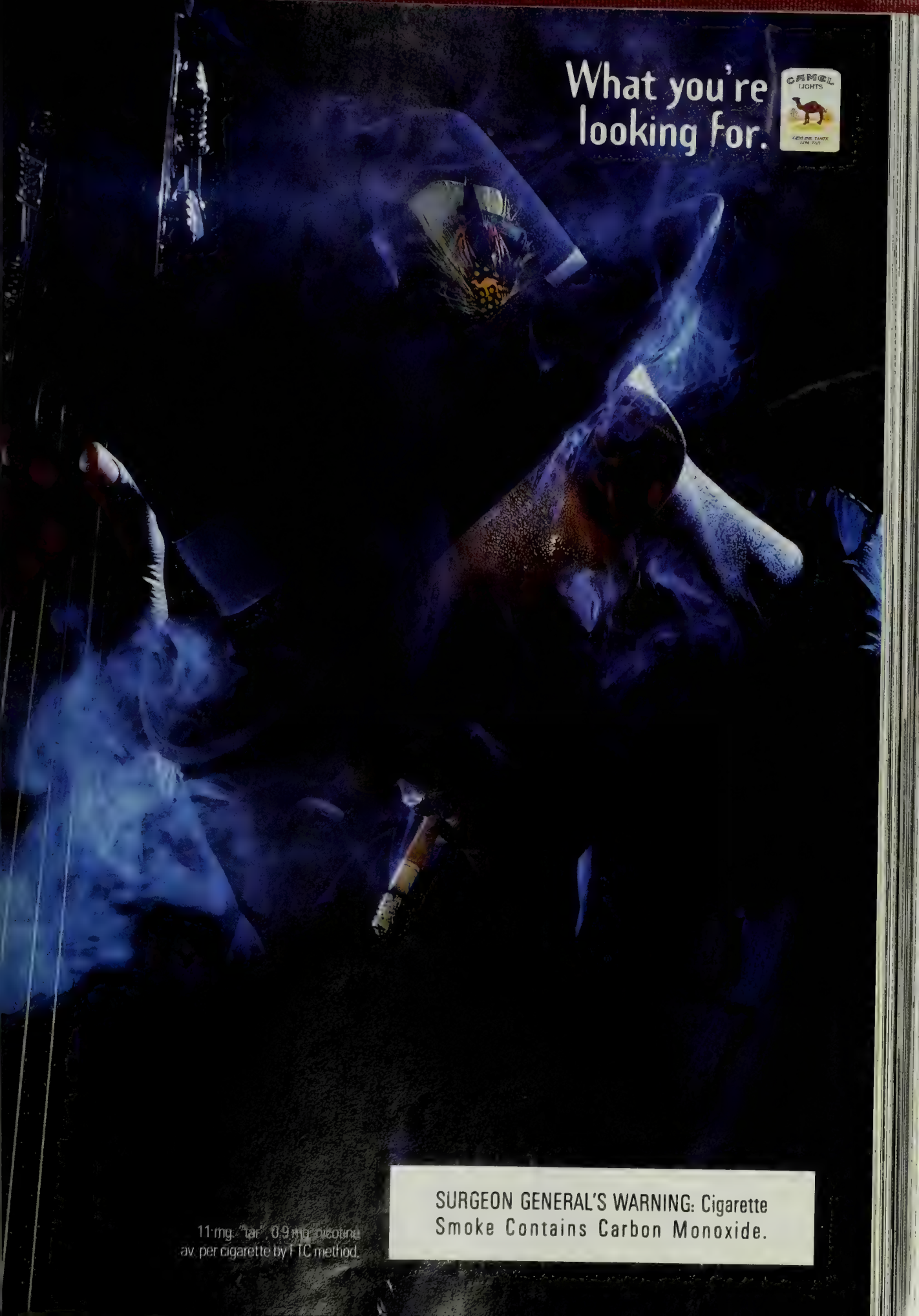
My last visitor was Christopher Isherwood on a friendly call combined with film-watching at Eastman House. . . . I hope you get more nourishing stuff out of me on Keaton and Schenck than I got out of Ish-Ish on Auden and Vidal.

Louise once greeted me at the door with "How dare you say that Joe Schenck had an ounce of human kindness in his vile body?" Louise had no mercy for Schenck or, for that matter, any of the Hollywood producers of the 20s, asserting that, collectively, they had smashed the careers of many of the leading silent stars, including Keaton and John Gilbert. When I questioned the logic of some of her specific claims, she approached the problem from other perspectives.

Why do you try to set me up against the film producers? *I am on their side.* I simply won't have them rewritten as silly do-gooders. They set the picture business up in a way that gave them absolute control over the stars and star directors—anybody who threatened their power and financial supremacy. . . . The whole history of the big studios is a graveyard of stars who got out of control. And the stars had to be completely destroyed with bad pictures so that the exhibitors and the public would accept their obliteration and so that no other studios could reconstitute them. [Joe Schenck] started on Keaton with *The General*—lousy publicity. I was in Hollywood in 1927—nobody heard of it. *Talkies* coming in. . . . Why don't these slobs [people like Anita Loos] write the truly tragic fact that *talkies killed Keaton?* I don't think that father love, wifely support, complete sobriety, the backing of the Schencks and MGM could have reconciled the public to the shock of Buster's pure, austere face combined with the growl of an angry giant.

Unlike her famous contemporary Marlene Dietrich (Louise's rival for the part of Lulu in *Pandora's Box*), Louise was not vain about her personal appearance. She once sent me a photograph taken in her apartment in her 70th year, telling me that I was free to use it if I wished since that was how she really looked.

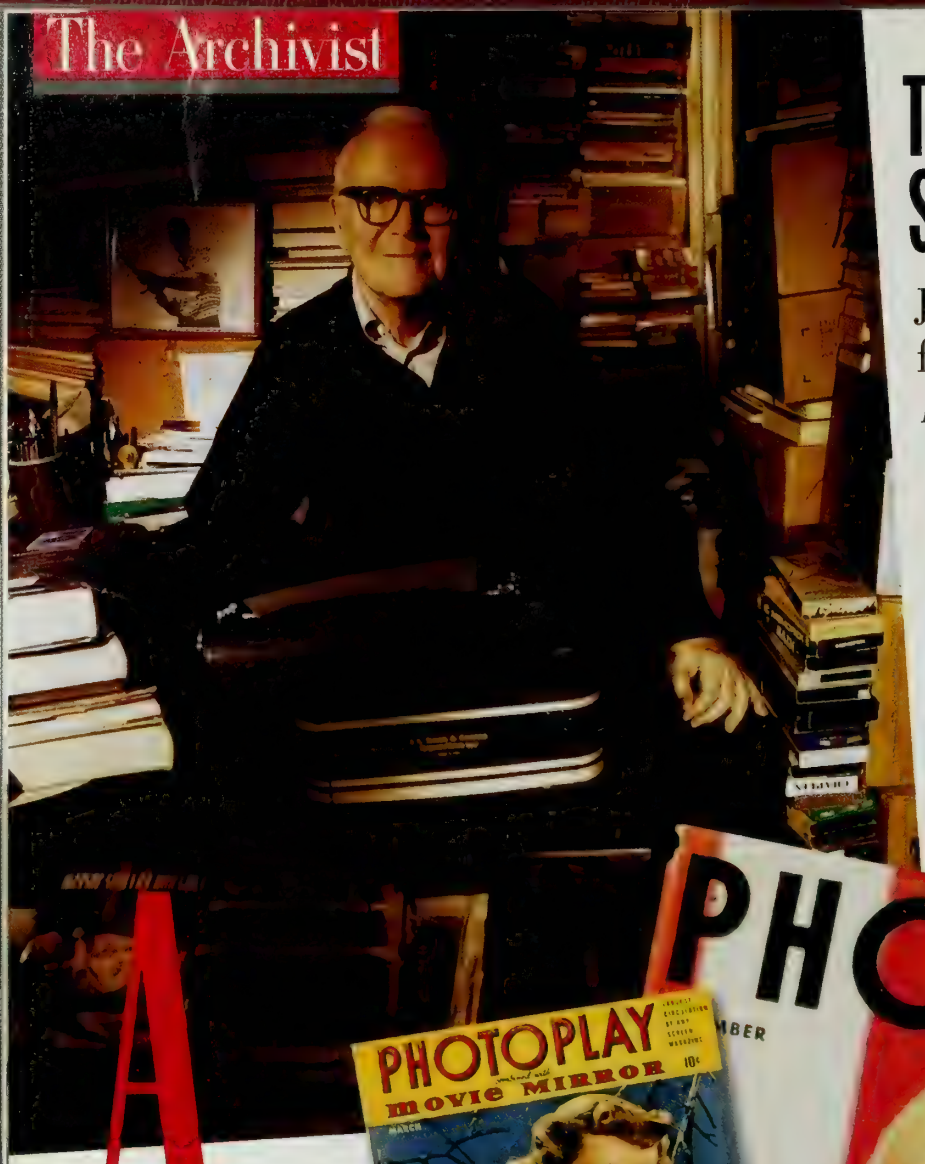
Rereading Louise's letters after 2 years has left me with renewed admiration for her passion for truth and what she liked to call "excellence" in art. The truth was the truth, in Louise's eyes, and absolutely nothing must disguise it. And for art, that needed all the help it could get from people like her, who cared to distinguish between shoddy, counterfeit work and the real, rare thing. □


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THAT OLD STAR MAGIC

James Quirk edited the first, powerful fan magazine, *Photoplay*, in the 20s and 30s, introduced Joe Kennedy to Hollywood (and to Gloria Swanson), and hobnobbed w Mary Pickford and Cecil B. DeMille. His nephew, Larry, has made a life–and a cause–from that legacy

BY PATRICIA BOSWORTH

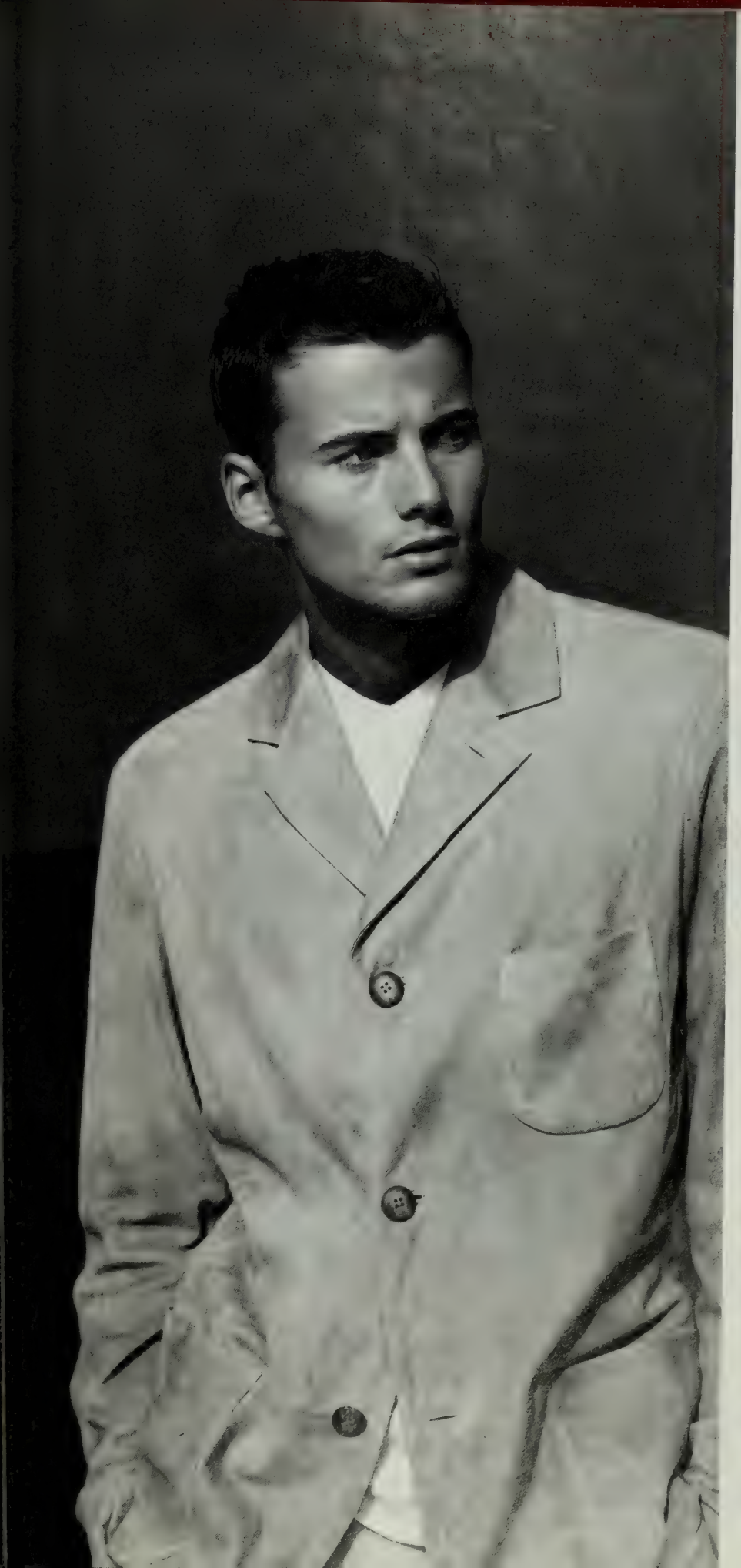




August 1997. Engulfed by teetering piles of books, moldering magazines, yellowed newspapers, fading movie posters, bulging files, and stacks of dusty publicity stills stuffed into old Lord & Taylor shopping bags, Larry Quirk, the film historian and former fan-magazine editor, is banging out another manuscript on his typewriter. He works in the confines of a tiny, rent-controlled Greenwich Village apartment he's been living in since 1955, and the place is so crammed with memorabilia that you can barely make out the shape of his battered desk with a black dial tele-

Film biographer and editor Larry Quirk, in his Greenwich Village apartment, *top*, says *Photoplay*, which his uncle made great, was the yardstick for measuring all fan magazines. *Insets, Photoplay* covers of Bette Davis (March 1942) and Marilyn Monroe (December 1953).

PHOTOGRAPH BY GASPER TRINGALE



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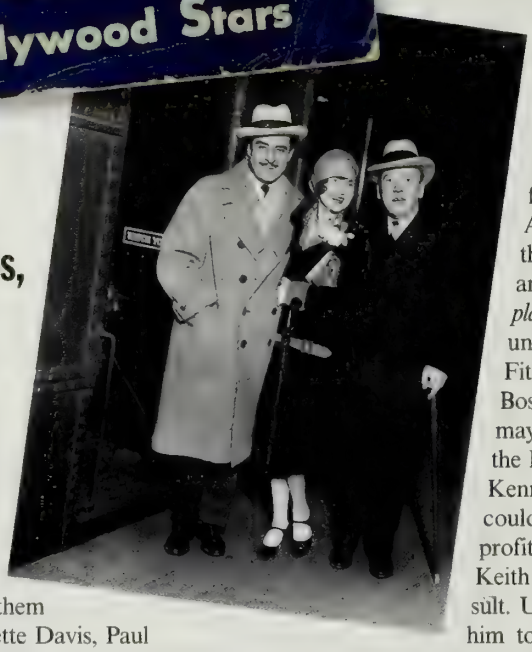
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Photoplay **cover of Jean Harlow (December 1931).** ***Below,*** **James Quirk,** ***Photoplay's*** **legendary editor, right, arrives in New York from Hollywood in 1926 with his new bride, actress Mae Allison, and silent-screen actor John Gilbert.**



"My uncle created the format—gossip columns, celebrity profiles, notes on movie productions."

phone on it. Quirk admits that he hasn't seen the kitchen for at least 10 years.

"Grotesque, isn't it?" he asks.

In a word, yes. But the fact remains that the 74-year-old author—with white hair in a crew cut and a rosy, compassionate face—has written 30 books in this dim, airless room, and most of them are still in print. They include biographies of Bette Davis, Paul Newman, Warren Beatty, Cher, Joan Crawford, Ronald Colman, and Norma Shearer. He has also ground out hundreds of articles on the movies for *The New York Times, Variety,* and the *Boston Herald.* He edits and publishes *Quirk's Reviews,* a 12-page monthly journal on film culture which he mails to about 1,000 film buffs and public-relations people at a cost of $1 an issue.

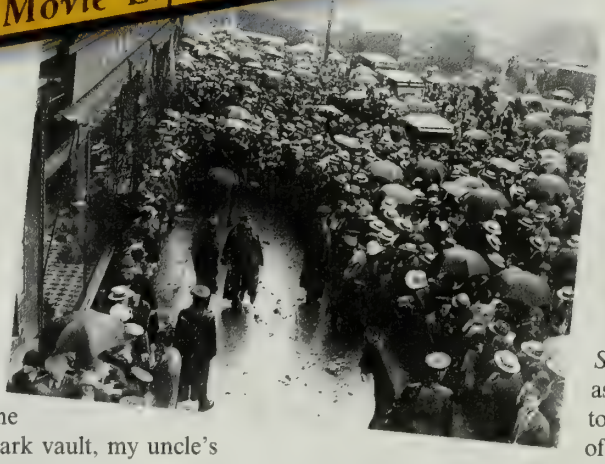
He does all this in an effort to preserve the glorious old Hollywood once documented by his uncle James R. Quirk, the editor of *Photoplay* magazine during the 1920s and 30s, when movie stars loomed larger than life and the public's fantasies were reinforced every time they sat in the dark and watched films with Greta Garbo or Clark Gable. Larry Quirk says that he has lived his "strange, sad existence" in order to pay tribute to his uncle, and the only way he can do that is to write about his career, his obsessions, his values. Quirk has mentioned his uncle in most of his books.

"My Uncle Jimmy was my role model," he explains. "Fiercely independent, very Irish. Always on the side of the good and the beautiful. He made up for my father when I was growing up. My father was nothing but a mean drunk.

"My uncle literally created the fan magazine format," he continues. "Gossip columns, celebrity profiles, notes on movie productions. He knew America needed heroes, and he saw Hollywood as the dream capital, full of glamour, excitement, and adventure. His version of *Photoplay* reflected just that. There were gorgeous color covers, wonderful photographs, and articles on everything from how to plot a screenplay to a session behind the scenes with Lillian Gish. He had Robert Sherwood writing movie reviews and Adela Rogers St. Johns, who went on to be Hearst's top reporter—interviewing the stars. From 1914 to 1937 *Photoplay* was the most influential film magazine in America. Before the Oscar the highest cinematic honor an actor could win was *Photoplay's* Gold Medal Award. My uncle had started off as John Fitzgerald's private secretary in Boston when Honey Fitz was mayor, so he became close to all the Kennedys. He convinced Joe Kennedy that the movie industry could turn him an enormous profit; Joe ultimately bought the Keith Albee movie circuit as a result. Uncle Jimmy also introduced him to Gloria Swanson, and *the* turned out to be one of the legendary affairs of Hollywood. My uncle was close to everybody in the business, from Adolph Zukor to L. B. Mayer, the Selznicks, C. B. DeMille. He knew Chaplin, Garbo, Buster Keaton. He advised Mary Pickford to cut off her curls and take on more mature roles.

"My uncle arranged Rudolph Valentino's funeral at Campbell's in New York. He chose the casket. And to save that icon from wear and tear, he substituted a wax dummy for the body—called in an artist who was CONTINUED ON PAGE





dolph Valentino on the cover of *otoplay*'s July 1922 issue. *Right,* a crowd s the street outside the Frank E. Campbell neral Home in Manhattan in August 26, waiting to view Valentino's body after s sudden death at 31.

NTINUED FROM PAGE 190 skilled at eating a perfect likeness. So while the al Valentino lay in peace in a cool, dark vault, my uncle's ux figure of Rudy took the brutal punishment from Valenti- 's hundreds of fans at the funeral parlor."

nce Quirk starts talking, he can't stop. He loves to dish, but he hates what he calls today's emphasis on "junk" news stories, like Hugh Grant and the prostitute in 1995. he O. J. Simpson tragedy was turned into TV entertain- nt," he growls. "I go by my Uncle Jimmy's credo: A dis- ce should be kept between the star and the public. When I s starting to write for the fan mags in the 1950s, there sn't such a close psychic—or should I say psychotic—con- tion between Joe Schmo and the likes of Madonna."

In the late 1940s and early 50s, 60 million Americans at- ded movies every week, and they were hungry to hear sto-

"My uncle chose Valentino's casket and substituted a wax dummy for the body."

ries about their favorite stars—Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, Cary Grant. That's where the fan magazines came in, according to Quirk. "The fan magazines helped to create a kind of fiction. We'd write stories about the stars as ordinary people living in suburban homes with dogs and gardens and barbecue pits. It was a great American fantasy—the stars were as 'normal' as we were. Everybody believed Joan Crawford was the loving mother of four adopted kids. Nobody knew until Faye Dunaway starred in *Mommie Dearest* that Crawford actually beat her kids with clothes hangers. Scandals were hushed up. When Clark Gable ran over a little boy—Gable was drunk—somebody else at MGM took the rap. I was banned from MGM because I wrote about how Doris Day's husband Marty Melcher was screwing around with her money.

"Today nothing is sacred. Nothing. Do people really want to know about how Marlon Brando farts? Or Whoopi Goldberg's opinion on the subject? Her new book begins with that word. The furthest I've ever gone is to reveal that Cher has a tattoo on her butt." He lists some of her other tattoos, which include a blue-black orchid above her pubis. "She gets most of them done at an all-female tattoo parlor called Red Devil on La-Brea in L.A."

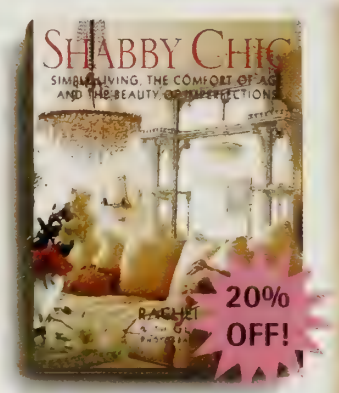
Back in 1965, Larry Quirk was my first boss. While he was editor of *Screen Stars* magazine, he hired me as a writer. We've never lost touch. Larry and I were part of a group who worked for a company called Magazine Management. It occupied one low-ceilinged floor of dingy offices off East 58th Street, and the space could barely contain all of its publications. Aside from the fan mags (*Screen Stars, Movie World, Movie Album*), there were a couple of romance magazines and Marvel Comics, created by cartoonist Stan Lee, as well as five men's magazines, edited by the incredibly handsome novelist Bruce Jay Friedman, who had just published *A Mother's Kisses.*

The men's magazines, featuring fictionalized sex-and-action tales, were the moneymakers—*Stag, For Men Only, Male, True Action. Stag* and *Male* each sold a million copies a month. (*Screen Stars* scraped by at about 60,000.)

The then unknown novelist Mario Puzo was the star writer at *True Action.* He could concoct the most preposterous tales

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and make them totally believable. "We needed 50 stories a month to fill our publications," Bruce told me recently. "It could be a bar-hooker yarn, a death trek to Borneo, a bridge being blown up in Shanghai, and Mario would never fail us. He could whip up a wild combination of characters, dialogue, and action, and nail the story to the wall. Since he was a veteran of World War II, his specialty was creating giant mythical armies in combat in Central Europe. He had casualties coming in by the hundreds of thousands."

When I started at Magazine Management, Mario had been there nine years. A rotund, faintly melancholy man with soulful eyes and a blunt manner, he was invariably bent over a typewriter in the glassed-in bull pen that was the men's-magazine department, because he was always broke. An inveterate gambler, he owed $20,000 to various relatives, loan sharks, and banks.

Mario dreamed of being a great artist. He had published two novels, which netted him a total of $6,500. The second of these, *The Fortunate Pilgrim,* about an Italian-American family, had been called "a small classic" by *The New York Times.* Mario asked his publisher for an advance so that he could begin his next novel, but he was told he would be given money only if he wrote about the Mafia, because the character in *The Fortunate Pilgrim* that had intrigued the publisher was a person who is tempted by the lure of organized crime. Mario had naïvely thought that book publishers believed in art, he said, "but what they really wanted to do was get rich. And please don't tell me, 'No kidding.'" Mario decided finally "to grow up and sell out," and he agreed to write a novel about a Mafia family. He called it *The Godfather.* I had never heard that term, and nobody else had, either. Mario coined it.

From 1966 through July 1968, while Mario was writing the book, for which he got a $5,000 advance, he had to keep on freelancing at Magazine Management, producing three adventure stories a month. I remember hearing him tell the other editors that he was having a lot of trouble writing about the underworld, since he'd never met a gangster, and that he had to rely on research.

"The fan magazines helped to creat a kind of fiction. It was a great American fantasy—the stars were as 'normal' as we were."

Larry and I and two assistants put o *Screen Stars* and two other mov magazines each month, and we som times wrote everything ourselves. We ways seemed to be frantically busy, b ting out yet another installment of t Liz-and-Dick saga or the feud on t TV series *Peyton Place,* or sifting throu press releases, or rushing off to scree ings. I often talked on the phone wi friends at rival fan mags. At *Motion P ture* I knew Aljean Harmetz, who wo go on to cover movies for *The N York Times.* Harriet Lyons was over *Silver Screen.* Years later, along w Gloria Steinem, she would be one the original editors of *Ms.*

A few of our subjects impinged our private lives. I remember that Jo Crawford, for instance, would ph Larry at all hours of the day and nig Larry had done many stories on when she was a major star. Now was fading and lonely, and he hand her with great tact, but he refused to swer her calls at two A.M., when she in her cups. "Access to a star should and does not mean intimacy w you're a fan-mag editor," he would s

Elvis Presley was then the most po lar star in the world, so we had to something about him in every is which upset Larry greatly. He thou Elvis was crude and boorish. He reser rock stars in general, probably beca they were becoming bigger celebr than movie stars. I covered a Rol Stones press junket on a yacht on Hudson River, but when I suggested ing it up for the magazine, Larry said He also said no at first to Bob Dylan

I argued for a story about the Bea whom I interviewed one by one i drafty old movie studio near Lon while thousands of fans screamed side. I had a terrific conversation John Lennon, who served me tea an scribed the one evening he'd spent Elvis, discussing the importance of c try music and how much they mi their dead mothers. At one point Le indicated a hairy youth standing

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Larry Quirk lunches with sex symbol Jayne Mansfield and her Chihuahuas in New York, 1957. *Below:* ***Photoplay*** covers of Grace Kelly (April 1956) and Marilyn Monroe (February 1953).





"Movie stars lost their meaning when Jackie Kennedy became a faux star," said Gore Vidal.

nously by the door and whispered, "My bodyguard didn't ask you out, did he?" No, I said, puzzled, and Lennon grinned. "I'm glad. Don't be tempted, because the man is a pig." Larry seemed unimpressed with the anecdote and with the Beatles as a cultural phenomenon. He could not relate to their joyful, exuberant music and youthful high jinks, but he eventually, if reluctantly, agreed to run my story.

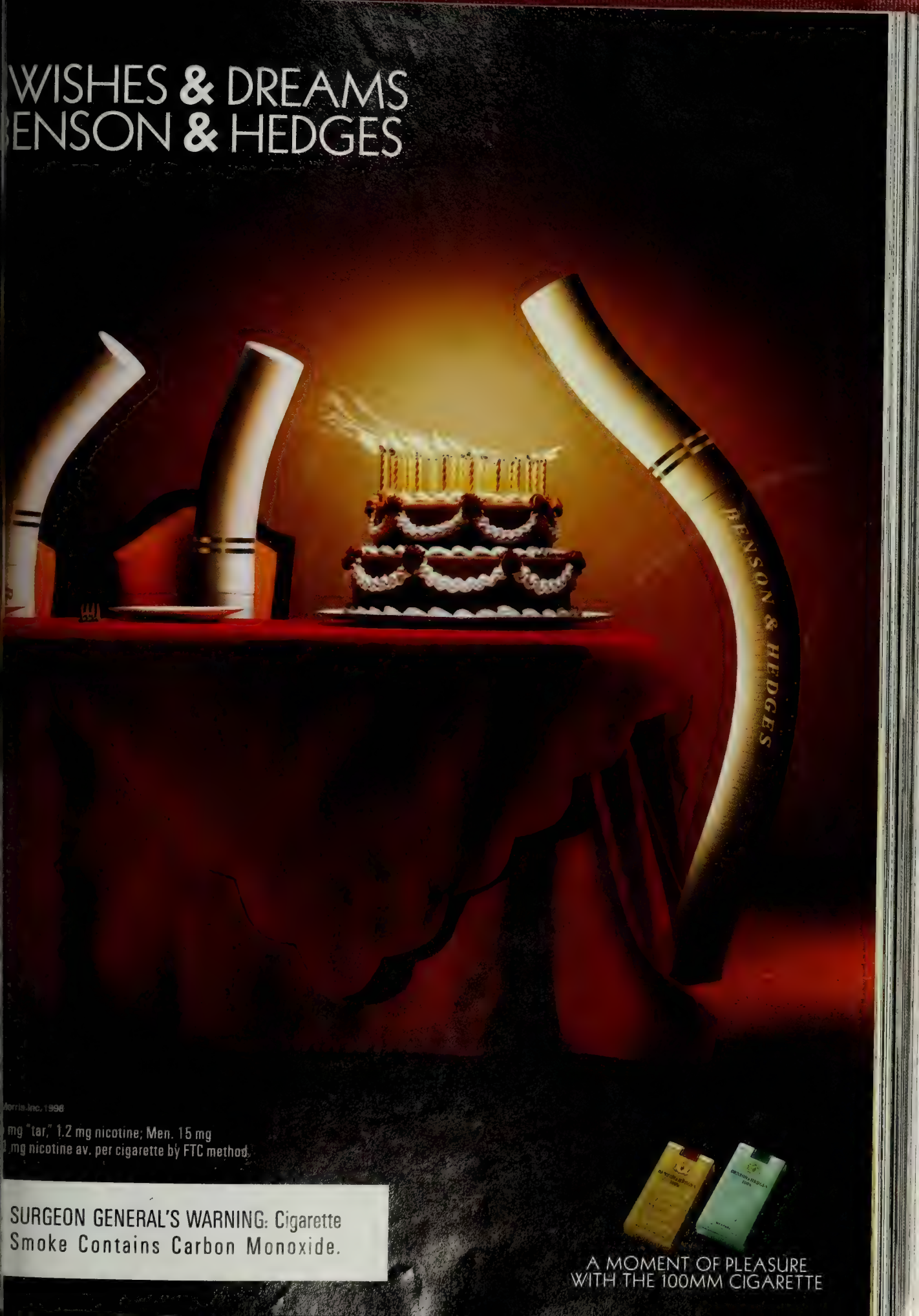
He refused to run a word about Jackie Kennedy, the Princess Diana of that time. He thought it would be undignified to put the widow of a president on the cover of *Screen Stars.* He even wrote an editorial in the magazine, entitled "Why Don't They Leave Jackie Alone?" He was referring in particular to our rivals—*Motion Picture, Silver Screen, Modern Screen, Photoplay*—which had all been running articles on Jackie ever since the Kennedy assassination, and they were outselling *Screen Stars.* The fan magazines were not alone. *Life, Look,* and the women's magazines were obsessed with her, too. So was television. "Movie stars lost their meaning when Jackie became a faux star," Gore Vidal said.

The whole idea of celebrity was changing. The distance betweeen the famous and the public was lessening, and Larry found this hard to accept. "No more magic, no more mystery," he kept saying. Yet during the 1960s, events were moving swiftly—the burning of Watts, the escalation of the war in Vietnam—and taboos were being lifted. Established puritanical values were being challenged by feminism, the sexual revolution, mysticism, and drugs. Small wonder the public wanted to read about real people and be informed about real events.

Through all of this ferment, most of us at Magazine Manageme existed mainly in our own little worlds. shared an art department, where we would ta layouts to be photostatted, and where we mi listen to wild bursts of talk from Ernest Tidyman, a writer formerly at *Confidential* magazine, who in 1971 wo win an Oscar for his screenplay of *The French Connection.* usually held forth with Mario and Bruce and George Per the men's magazines' expert on spies. George was consider the office intellectual because he had worked on Henry W lace's failed presidential campaign in 1948. His stories ab the Pentagon in *True Action* sounded so authentic that a C.I agent once appeared in the bull pen demanding to know wh he had gotten his information.

Most of us there were battling the uncertainties, isolati and financial insecurity that are part of a writer's life, and ev one of us dreamed of writing the great American novel. though Magazine Management offered us a temporary ha and a weekly paycheck, we had to grind out an unbelieva amount of trash, which could be deeply depressing. "Let's f it, we're working in the armpit of publishing," Larry used to "If I have to look at one more truss ad, I think I'll scream!"

Larry rarely spoke to anybody but me, and he would alw leave the office promptly at five, carrying a large shopping full of clippings and glossies. He kept hoping that he co


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take over *Photoplay,* the biggest of the fan magazines, with monthly sales of 600,000, and restore the Quirk name and reputation. He even had meetings with Bernarr Macfadden, the publisher, but the talks broke down. "We couldn't come to terms," he told me.

One day in the fall of 1965, something very special occurred which cheered us up immeasurably. A tall man in a black cape and hat swept grandly into the lobby of Magazine Management and murmured a request in Italian to the receptionist. She couldn't understand what he was saying. "Who?" she barked. "Who did you say you was?"

At that moment, Mario Puzo happened to be passing by. He did a double take when he saw the man, then slowly walked over to him and put out his hand, saying in Italian, "How do you do? I'm Mario Puzo. Are you Federico Fellini?"

Fellini nodded, laughing, and told Mario that he wanted to meet Stan Lee, the "genius cartoonist" of Marvel Comics, who had created Spider-Man. "I want to pay him homage," he said.

"I will take you to him," Mario said, and led the great director to the art department. Within minutes everyone had heard that Fellini was on the premises, and we all gathered to watch as Stan and Fellini became acquainted.

Did Mario translate? I forget. But I remember that Fellini praised Stan Lee for revolutionizing the comic-book hero by making him three-dimensional. "Spider-Man is human and vulnerable. He'll break up a fight, but then he'll burst into tears. *Fantastico!*"

"Before the Oscar, the highest cinematic honor an actor could win was *Photoplay*'s Gold Medal Award."

Somebody asked him what his most vivid memory of making *La Dolce Vita* was, and he said, "Anita Ekberg." He told us how she had been able to immerse herself in the Trevi Fountain over and over again, whereas Marcello Mastroianni had gotten so cold that he had to wear a frogman suit and drink vodka until he was completely drunk. Fellini told us that he liked to read magic books and court reports of murders and gossip of all kinds in the tabloids. As a young man, he said, he had been a caricaturist. In his favorite film, *I Vitelloni,* he had immortalized the world of schlock—"the world you are all in," he said, gesturing toward us, "the world of comics, of romance books and adventure." Yes, he said, he was enjoying New York. "It is like a dream, a nightmare, insane, a big circus."

Fellini radiated such goodwill and energy that it was as if a huge golden sun had moved into Magazine Management. Everything seemed brighter and lighter that afternoon. After he left, we talked excitedly with one another, feeling freer and easier than we had in months. But the feeling didn't last.

In 1969, Mario Puzo published *The Godfather,* which became one of the best-selling novels of all time. It has sold 21 million copies.

In 1972, when the film of *The Godfather* premiered in New York, I was managing editor of *Harper's Bazaar,* and I attended the party at the St. Regis Hotel and ran into Mario, resplendent in a tux and surrounded by his family and Al Pacino and Robert Evans, the head of production for Paramount. Evans tried to stop me from joining their table, because he didn't know who I was, but Mario said, "It's O.K., Bob," and he stood up, and we tried to talk, in spite of the music and noise. It was crazy. Mario, who for years had attempted to be singular and distinctive, was now rich and popular, and he had to conform somehow to the rituals of success. Photographers were pushing in on us, trying to get Mario to pose with Evans and Pacino, but Mario seemed to want to linger and talk with me. Finally, Evans tugged at his sleeve impatiently. "Hey, Mario, come on," he said, adding, "What the fuck is so important about Magazine Management?"

"Magazine Management made it possible for me to write *The Godfather,* Bob," Mario said quietly.

But by that time Magazine Management was folding, and so were most of the fan magazines, to be replaced by the *National Enquirer* and, in 1973, *People.*

Now we're back in August 1997, and Larry is sweating. So am I. We've been reminiscing for hours, crammed together in his cluttered little apartment, which is very hot. We decide to go out and have some dinner. Before we leave, Larry gives me an inscribed copy of his biography of James Stewart, which Applause Books has just published. He says he worked on it intermittently for 25 years. "It will show the dark, complicated side of Jimmy," he says, "the side he showed in *Vertigo.* You know, that movie is really about necrophilia. It's a psychological suspense masterpiece. You get something different with each viewing. Maybe that's why it's one of the most-watched movies of all time. And Bernie Herrmann's score is mesmerizing."

Larry says he has also been juggling two half-finished books, one on Rita Hayworth and the other on Frank Sinatra's Rat Pack, which he has been writing with his part-time collaborator and full-time companion, William Schoell, who at this moment pops into view from behind a TV set which is jammed in between two rumpled single beds. He has been living there all the time, listening to us.

"Hi there," he says genially. A mustachioed man of 46, Schoell confides that, yes, they both live in this dusty, crowded nest.

"But how can you stand it?" I ask.

Larry answers, "I honestly don't know. Sometimes when it's more than I can bear, I go up to my uncle's old office. It's in a very elegant old limestone building on West 57th Street. The Hard Rock Cafe is now on the ground floor, and of course all other business occupies the space *Photoplay* had. My uncle died in 1932, but I've been going up there for years and just standing in the foyer until the receptionist asks me to leave.

"Then last week I found it vacated. I got so excited! The super let me go inside, and I walked into my uncle's office—still exactly the same, wood-paneled, with a view overlooking Central Park. It was just as I remembered it when I first visited *Photoplay* as a teenage boy, in the 1930s. And I felt better. It was as if my Uncle Jimmy was still watching over me. Then I came back to my hole and continued to endure."

Schoell adds cheerily, "When we're both here, we just sit next to each other and write." Schoell, who is the author of books, including seven novels, writes on his computer, while Larry composes on his typewriter. They go out together for all their meals, usually to the Beatrice Inn on West 12th Street. They also visit friends and see a lot of movies.

"And," Larry adds intensely, "Bill does escape every three weeks to visit his 83-year-old mother in Yonkers, so he can stretch a bit. Otherwise we'd both go stark raving mad!" □


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Mike Myers as Studio 54 co-owner Steve Rubell, *fa* with Sela Ward as the soc habituée and Ryan Phillip the bartender. *Inset,* Sal Hayek as the coat-check



SCENES FROM A STUDIO

Miramax and writer-director Mark Christopher have re-created the nonstop party that whirled behind the velvet rope of Studio 54

BY BOB COLACELLO

Once upon a time, before sexual harassment and politic correctness, before "Just Say No" and "Don't Ask, Don Tell," before AIDS but after the pill, there was a very sp cial place, on West 54th Street in Manhattan, with a ve vet rope and silver vinyl banquettes and spinning ligh and free quaaludes and poppers—called Studio 54—whe out-of-control debutantes from the Upper East Side, n to mention Nicaragua, Peru, and Munich, took off the tops on the dance floor and met Greek shipping heirs ar were on the Concorde to the couture collections a few hours late where well-built boys from New Jersey became star bartenders ar dated Hollywood moguls and got their own TV shows; where socialit

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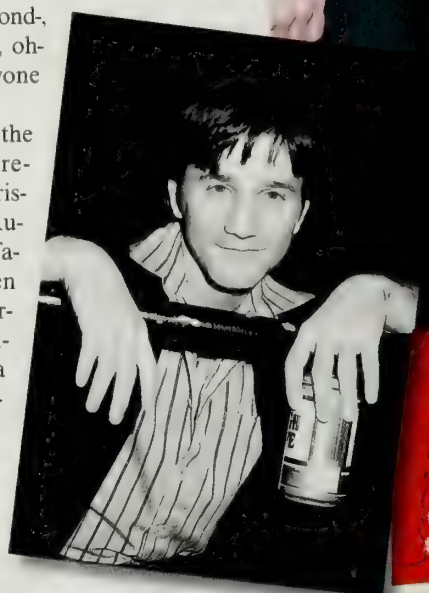
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It was a very special place, with a velvet rope and silver vinyl banquettes and spinning lights and free quaaludes and poppers.

kiss-kissed artists who snapped Polaroids of rock stars who powdered the noses of fashion designers who made out with models in the balcony and the basement; where an aging transvestite on roller skates twirled without pause from the Halloween party to the New Year's Eve party to the first-, second-, and third-anniversary parties to the final, oh-so-fabulous going-to-jail bash, and everyone lived happily ever after, or died.

In July, Miramax will try to make the magic come alive again in *54,* the feature-film debut of writer-director Mark Christopher, starring Mike Myers as Steve Rubell, the late great impresario of the fabled club. The film also offers Lauren Hutton as a jaded blueblood; Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, and Halston look-alikes; cameo limo arrivals by Veronica Webb, Sheryl Crow, and Cindy Crawford; and 70s disco diva Gloria Gaynor belting out "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas."

Let the fake snow fall! □

From top: **gathered at Studio 54, from left, Breckin Meyer as the busboy, Salma Hayek, Mike Myers, Sela Ward, Ryan Phillippe, and Neve Campbell as the soap-opera star; the soap star arrives by limo; the busboy chills.**



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THE MGM GIRLS

Under the iron rule of Louis B. Mayer, "the MGM girls" sang and danced their way through some 250 films, grossed more than $400 million, and formed the most exclusive club in Hollywood



MGM girls in January 1998, from left: Jane Powell, June Allyson, Ann Miller, Cyd Charisse, Gloria DeHaven, and Marge Champion.

No one recalls who came up with the tag "the MGM girls," but it has clung, over the years, to the nine women who starred in the big Metro musicals of the 40s and 50s: June Allyson, Marge Champion, Cyd Charisse, Gloria DeHaven, Kathryn Grayson, Ann Miller, Jane Powell, Debbie Reynolds, and Esther Williams. As Ann Miller says, "There's no other sorority like it. . . . The entry fee for pledging was talent." All together, they made some 250 films, which grossed more than $400 million.

Their boss, the ferocious Louis B. Mayer, had mellowed by the time "the girls" entered his life. He was 56 at the start of World War II, and he lovingly developed each of these young women into a unique star. "He was a father to me," say Allyson. Debbie Reynolds called him Papa Mayer. Thing changed in 1951, however, when Mayer was forced out c MGM in a corporate coup.

The MGM girls went on to new careers, in black-and white movies and the legitimate theater and nightclubs an concert halls. Williams built up a multimillion-dolla swimming-pool business, and Reynolds bought and lost Las Vegas nightclub. Allyson became the spokesperson fc Depends, and Powell for Polident. In all, they have had 2 husbands and lived a total of more than six centuries.

Mayer once told Grayson, "You will be a star forever. They all still are.

—PETER HARRY BROW

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM JONES

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THE INVISIBLE WOMAN

Documentary filmmaker Barbara Kopple collected Oscars for her searing portraits of blue-collar America (*Harlan County, U.S.A.* and *American Dream*) before turning her laser eye on Woody Allen's jazz-band tour of Europe—and catching some surprising moments between Woody and Soon-Yi

BY LESLIE BENNETTS



I AM A CAMERA "She's got the knack of being unobtrusive," says Kopple's recent subject Woody Allen. The documentarian is shown here with cameraman Kyle Kibbe (left) and soundman Peter Miller, in Tribeca, January 1998.

Compared with some of Barbara Kopple's other films, *Wild Man Blues,* her documentary about Woody Allen's jazz band, was a piece of cake. Nobody sprayed her with machine-gun fire, as angry scabs did while she was filming striking mine workers for her first documentary, *Harlan County, U.S.A.* And nobody threatened to kill her, as a mine superintendent once did, twirling his gun menacingly.

Indeed, as Kopple followed Allen's band during its 18-city tour of Europe, the accommodations included not only indoor plumbing but also room service. The tour began with a stay at the Hôtel Ritz in Paris, a startling departure from the poverty the Kentucky coal miners Kopple lived with during the filmi of *Harlan County, U.S.A.,* which won a 1976 Academy Award

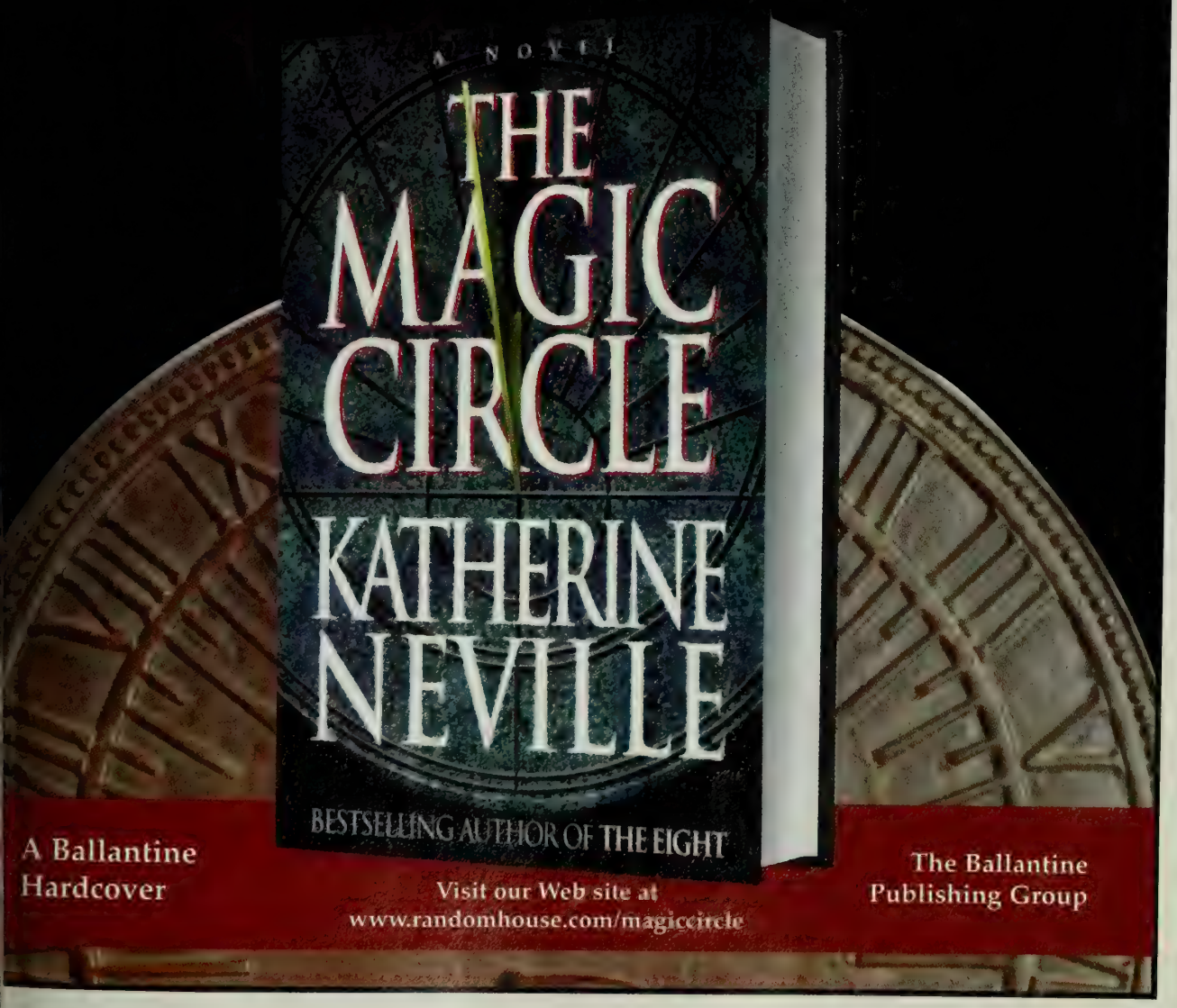
She also earned a 1990 Oscar for *American Dream,* her se ing portrait of a bitter strike at a Hormel meatpacking plant Minnesota. That project found Kopple huddling on the pick line alongside striking meatpackers in a windchill that dropp to 60 degrees below zero.

Wild Man Blues was shown at the Venice Film Festi and at Sundance, where it won the prize for documenta cinematography. But its subject remains characteristica

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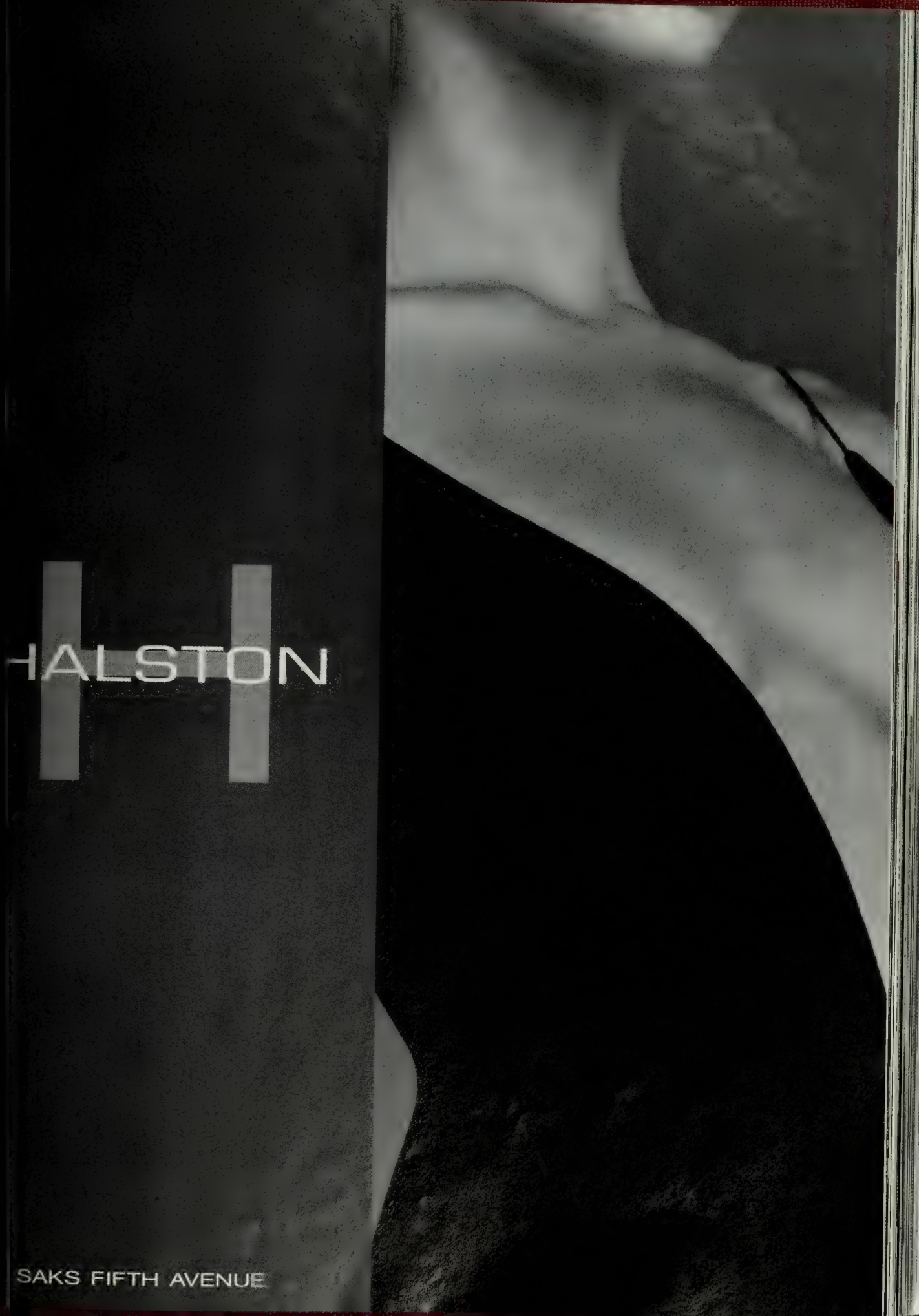
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THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

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gloomy about its commercial prospects. "I think no one will be interested in this film," Woody Allen says. "People are not interested in documentaries, they are not overly interested in me and my films, and they're not interested in New Orleans jazz, especially the way I play it."

But American audiences may well be fascinated by the intimate moments between Allen and his then girlfriend, Soon-Yi Previn, whom he married in December. After the 1992 scandal surrounding their clandestine affair and Allen's breakup with Previn's adoptive mother, Mia Farrow—not to mention the child-sex-abuse allegations and the ensuing legal battles over Allen's access to his and Farrow's children—there is undeniable prurient interest in observing Allen and Previn at breakfast *à deux*, take their morning showers, swim in the lap pool of their palatial Viennese hotel suite, and cope with Allen's assorted anxieties, complaints, and demands.





COAL MINER'S *AUTEUR*
***From top:* Kopple edits during postproduction of *Harlan County, U.S.A.*; a Kentucky coal miner featured in that film; a scene from *American Dream*, Kopple's portrait of a strike at the Hormel meatpacking plant in Minnesota, which earned her a second Oscar.**



Although Previn is only 27 and Allen is 62, she is so assertive that she seems domineering. In virtually every frame she is either criticizing or bullying him, to the point where the film's title begins to seem unintentionally funny; it might more aptly have been called *Mild Man Blues*. In one scene, room service delivers an omelette which Previn claims is inedible; she snatches Allen's breakfast and makes him eat hers, blithely ignoring his intellectual protests.

At one point Allen makes an acid reference to her pre-adoption background—"this kid who was eating out of garbage pails in Korea," as he puts it. But in general he plays Caspar Milquetoast to Previn's dominatrix—a dynamic whose origins are suggested at the end of the film during Allen's obligatory return visit to his parents in Brooklyn. Although Martin and Nettie Konigsberg are both in their 90s, they continue to carp and cavil, insisting that their famous son is no great shakes and that whatever he has achieved is only what *they* made him. Woody may be famous, but his parents still think he should have become a pharmacist. Suddenly it doesn't seem surprising that he has married a woman who claims never to have seen *Annie Hall* or *Manhattan*, and who says she has never read anything he's written.

"When people tell me something can't be done," says Kopple, "I just listen and smile and think, Of course it can."

The box-office appeal of Allen *en famille* doesn't concern Kopple; she doesn't choose projects for their commercial potential. They have won acclaim nevertheless. She is the only female feature-documentary filmmaker ever to have earned two Academy Awards, and at 51 (her age varies depending on which day you ask) she is a generation younger than the other leading lights in her field. In a Richard Avedon photograph hanging at the entrance to her office, Kopple's come-hither sultriness offers quite a contrast to D. A. Pennebaker's Santa-like figure and the craggy faces of Frederick Wiseman and Alfred Maysles (with whom Kopple apprenticed).

All three men have had long careers. Pennebaker's oeuvre ranges from *Don't Look Back*, which followed Bob Dylan's 1965 English tour, and 1969's *Monterey Pop*, the first major rock-concert film, to a documentary about the 1992 presidential campaign, *The War Room*. With Pennebaker and others, Maysles co-directed the landmark 1960 political documentary *Primary*. His more recent films include 1996's *Letting Go: A Hospice Journey*, and *Abortion: Desperate Choices*, which won a 1995 Peabody Award. Frederick Wiseman has specialized in American institutional life, from his first documentary, *Titicut Follies*, about life in a prison for the criminally insane, to *High School*, *Law and Order*, *Hospital*, *Juvenile Court*, and *Welfare*.

But among younger filmmakers, Kopple is renowned. John Scher, president and C.E.O. of the Metropolitan Entertainment Group, says, "Barbara Kopple is the premier American documentarian right now."

In the light-filled SoHo loft that serves as headquarters for her company, Kopple alternates between squirming like a coquettish little girl and flinging around her long jet-black mane. She is wearing her usual uniform: black tights, little black boots, and a black top (which, on my various visits, consisted of sensuous velvet shirts and, on one occasion, a formfitting lace number). The all-black attire suggests a sort of camouflage—understandable enough in a filmmaker whose job is to remain in the shadows while letting life unfold in front of her. But on some level, it is apparent that Barbara Kopple wants very much to be noticed.

In the early years of her career, when she was young, unknown, inexperienced, underfinanced, and sometimes in terrible danger, her looks—and how she used them—surely contributed to her success. "She was absolutely drop-dead beautiful," says Tom Hurwitz, the director of photography for *Wild Man Blues*. "Not only was she stunning, she was small, and men couldn't really believe that somebody that cute can be so intelligent."

Kopple also tends to utilize an itsy-bitsy baby-doll voice that provides a useful distraction from her laserlike focus. Her gaze is penetrating, but her normal manner is coy rather than forthright, even with women. "Think of yourself as a Kentucky sheriff, being presented with that voice," explains Hurwitz. "It's completely disarming; you think, Oh—I'm dealing with a little

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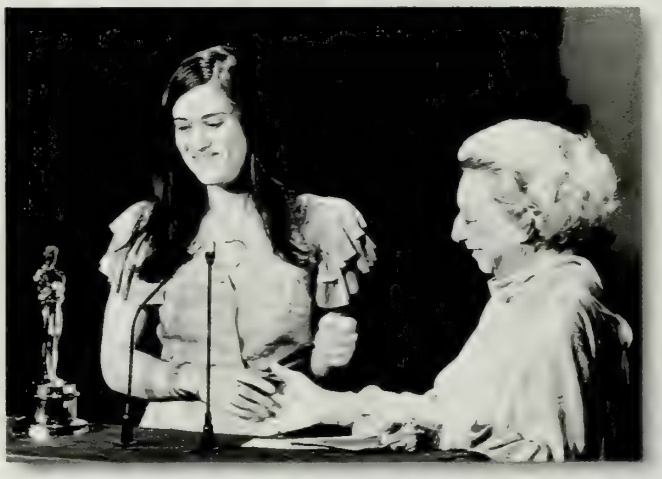
girl! And us big men have a way of reacting to a little girl: we feel protective, and all the juices start running." Affecting a lascivious tone, he drawls, "'*Hiiii,* little lady!'" He laughs. "She can wheedle, she can cry, she can bully—Barbara uses every tool at her command to get her stuff done."

While she's filming, Kopple has to make her subjects forget she is there. "She's got the knack of being unobtrusive," says Woody Allen. "Once you get used to it, the camera doesn't alter your behavior at all."

Actually, Kopple's subjects often realize with chagrin just how completely they have let their guard down. John Scher was president of PolyGram Diversified Entertainment when Kopple was hired to make *Woodstock II,* a documentary about the 1994 Woodstock festival. He recalls one executive meeting in which the discussion revolved around how many prophylactics to buy for the concessions. "I clearly forgot she was there," Scher says sheepishly. "You hear me saying, 'Hundreds of thousands of kids are coming, we're telling them they can't bring booze, can't bring drugs—what do you think they're going to do? *They're going to fuck!*'" He sighs. "I'm not sure how I'm going to explain that to my 12-year-old daughter, but it's the best example I can give you of what an effective documentarian Barbara is."

Her drive to succeed is overwhelming. "That's what distinguishes her from all the other talents out there," says Hurwitz. "She is relentless."

"When people tell me something can't be done, I just listen and smile and think, Of course it can be done," Kopple says. "I guess I like the chase. I like being able to do things people say you can't do; it excites me. It generates great energy."



BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

"She can wheedle, she can cry, she can bully," says Tom Hurwitz, the cinematographer for *Wild Man Blues.* "Barbara uses every tool at her command to get her stuff done." And it works. Here, Kopple accepts the Oscar—from presenter Lillian Hellman—for best feature documentary for her film *Harlan County, U.S.A.* in 1977.

Both of her Oscar-winning films took years to complete, and she is currently in the throes of another tortuous saga. Kopple began filming the Woodstock documentary in early 1994, but after several months PolyGram changed its mind and terminated the project. Kopple went right ahead with it. Four years later she is still struggling to find the money to complete the film, which is now called *Generations.*

Her perseverance is in stark contrast to many contemporaries who have been defeated by ever increasing odds. "Back in the 1960s, documentaries were very hot, and there was a big crowd of people making them," says Peter Biskind, author of *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls: How the Sex-Drugs-and-Rock-and-Roll Generation Saved Hollywood.* "As the political climate changed and the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities stopped giving money, people dropped by the wayside," Biskind explains. "Being a documentary filmmaker is really hard; it's analogous to pushing a boulder up a hill. Barbara is one of the few who started in the 60s who continued. I think people who have hung in there are really heroic."

The source of Kopple's determination remains mysterious; her early years give no hint of what was to follow. She was raised in privileged Scarsdale as the daughter of a New York textile executive and his homemaker wife, both of whom, she says, adored her. "I was made to feel there was nothing I couldn't do in my life," Kopple says. But from the time she left home her life took a very different trajectory from the comfortable affluence of her youth. First she headed for college in West Virginia, an odd choice for a Scarsdale girl. "When you're that age, you want to explore," she says. "I go on journeys. I go places people maybe haven't been."

She spent most of her time hanging out in a "holler" called Cabin Creek, the name she later chose for her film company. "It was the poorest of the poor, a place where young girls are prostitutes at 12 and 13 years old, where they have no indoor plumbing, where everyone's struggling to survive—a place that depicts a lot of hopelessness," says Kopple, who later attended Northeastern University but eventually dropped out of college. "I had never seen anything like this. It was a place that had such an impact on me that I wanted to make films about people you wouldn't ordinarily hear about. I chose the name for my company as a reminder.'"

Although it has been more than two decades since then, Kopple still hasn't forgotten. Even when she is telling the story of someone rich and famous, there tends to be a poignant subtext, as in the powerful portrait of Mike Tyson in her 1993 documentary, *Fallen Champ,* which evokes the harshness and emotional deprivation of his upbringing.

In recent months, Kopple has been shooting in Sarajevo, Cambodia, and South Africa. Her current projects include a Lifetime Television documentary called *Defending Our Daughters: The Rights of Women in the World,* which provides a harrowing look at the mistreatment of women in other countries, from the use of rape as a weapon of war in Bosnia to the genital mutilation inflicted on 130 million living African and Egyptian women. When I ask Rosemary Sykes, the director of programming at Lifetime, why Kopple was chosen for the project, Sykes replies, "She has a unique ability to find the small, personal stories that really explain the big story."

Kopple's personal life is actually quite bourgeois; she lives in SoHo with her second husband, a former union organizer, and her 16-year-old son, a Dalton student whose father is Kopple's first husband (and former cinematographer), Hart Perry.

But Kopple hasn't lost her taste for the exotic. "I love going on adventures and doing things I've never done before," she says. "I come alive when I'm working." She is hoping that this year she will finally complete the Woodstock film. "Doing the project is worth everything to me," she says. "It's not in my nature to get discouraged."

Those who know her have no doubt about what lies ahead. "When she goes up and accepts her third Oscar for this film, she'll never even say, 'You bastards!'" John Scher predicts. "She'll probably go and thank them." □



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RAGING DAYS, BOOGIE NIGHTS

In the early 1970s, a handful of young directors—Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, and Martin Scorsese among them—were given the keys to the Hollywood kingdom. With movies such as *The Godfather*, *American Graffiti*, and *Mean Streets*, they rocked the studios and changed the culture forever

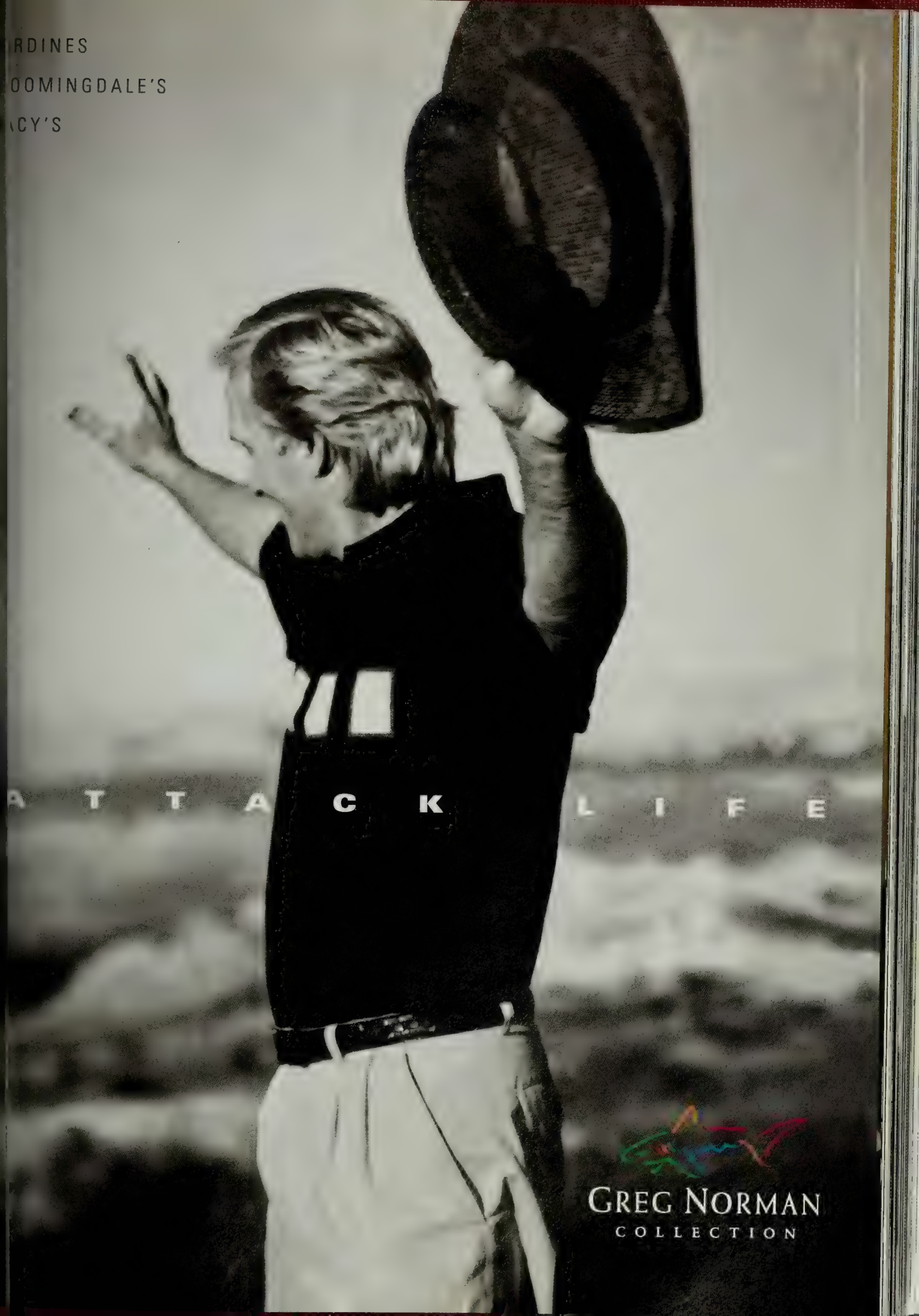
BY PETER BISKIND

WUNDERKIND LAND
Clockwise from top: **at a 1975 Hollywood party, Warren Beatty chats with Lee Grant as Jack Valenti (on floor), president of the Motion Picture Association of America, Jack Nicholson, and Michelle Phillips converse; George Lucas and Steven Spielberg in 1976; Francis Ford Coppola takes a meeting in San Francisco, 1974; *The Last Picture Show*'s Cybill Shepherd and Peter Bogdanovich, 1976; Robert De Niro and his director, Martin Scorsese, on the set of *Taxi Driver*, in 1975.**

"We were just guys who wanted to make movies, and we knew we could be cut down at any second by the studios," says Martin Scorsese of the talented circle of "movie brats" who helped create the New Hollywood. "It was like we were in foxholes with the shells falling around us."

But it wasn't bombs, or even studio warfare, that jolted the 28-year-old Scorsese in his room at Burbank's Toluca Motel at one minute past six A.M. on February 9, 1971. It was an earthquake registering 6.5. As a scattering of headlights broke the pre-dawn gloom and the recent L.A. immigrant dreamed of rare books, the ground heaved. Scorsese, who had just gotten a job at Warner Bros., thought it was the Big One. "Lightning was slashing across the sky—it was the falling wires from the telephone poles. I pulled on my cowb boots and went to t Copper Penny. The was a big aftersho I got up to run, a a guy looked up a asked, 'Where you ing to go?'"

The quake was g ing the lily—as Hollywood is wont to The convulsion upending the indust had started a decade earlier with a se


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of premonitory tremors—civil rights, the Beatles, the pill, Vietnam, sex, drugs—that shook lives. And, eventually, studios.

Because movies take so long to get made, Hollywood registers change slowly. It took some time for the seismic shifts to reach the studio gates. The dream factories were still in the rigor-mortis-like grip of the Old Guard. In 1965, Adolph Zukor, 92, and the slightly more juvenile Barney Balaban, 78, survived on Paramount's board; Jack Warner, 73, ran Warner Bros. Darryl F. Zanuck, 63, commanded Twentieth Century Fox. "If you were these guys, you weren't going to give this up," says Ned Tanen, who would later head Universal's motion-picture division. "To do what, sit at Hillcrest Country Club and play pinochle?"

Then, suddenly, it all changed. As America burned, Hell's Angels sped down Sunset, and the music of the Doors throbbed on the Strip. "It was like the ground was in flames and tulips were coming up at the same time," recalls Peter Guber, a trainee at Columbia who later headed Sony Pictures Entertainment. It was cultural revolution, American-style. As Steven Spielberg says, "It was just an avalanche of brave new ideas."

In 1967, the venerable Jack Warner sold his stake in the studio which bore his name to a TV packager, Seven Arts. Eliot Hyman became C.E.O. and his son Kenneth head of production. Kenny announced that he would woo directors by allowing them to retain more artistic control over their work. He gave a young in-house writer a shot at directing a Fred Astaire musical, *Finian's Rainbow*.

The year before, Francis Ford Coppola, a 28-year-old U.C.L.A. film-school graduate, had directed his first serious feature, *You're a Big Boy Now*, from his own script. "It was unheard of for a young fellow to make a feature," Coppola recalled. After shooting wrapped, the proud filmmaker walked the streets of New York with his chest thrust out. Then someone told him, "There's another young director who's made a feature, and he's only 26." Coppola was shocked. "It was Willie Friedkin." (The young director, who would win the Oscar in 1971 for *The French Connection*, was actually several years older than 26 when he made *Good Times*, with Sonny and Cher.)

You're a Big Boy Now opened in March 1967. The *Los Angeles Times* termed it "one of those rare American things, what the Europeans call an *auteur* film." Coppola bought a Jaguar and installed himself and his wife, Eleanor, in an A-frame in Mandeville Canyon. Friedkin was a frequent visitor, and Coppola tried to fix him up with his sister, Talia.

Eleanor was an artist and tapestry-maker who favored beads and long skirts of orange, purple, and other outrageous colors. Her bearded husband, a hefty five feet eleven, wore horn-rims with thick lenses. He was terminally rumpled and generally clad in fatigues, boots, and a cap.

For his next film, Coppola reluctantly accepted *Finian's Rainbow*, with its dancing leprechauns, sentimental score (the big numbers included "How Are Things in Glocca Mora?"), and rock-bottom budget. One day the director spotted a slight young man of 23 shyly watching him work. As the days passed, Coppola noticed that the young man always wore the same outfit: black chinos, a white T-shirt, and white sneakers.

"I had brought George Lucas along with me wherever I went," says Coppola, "but he didn't bring me along with him."

George Lucas was the U.S.C. whiz kid whose 15-minute short, *THX 1138: 4EB/Electronic Labyrinth*, had recently taken first prize at the third National Student Film Festival. His six-month Warner scholarship allowed him to do whatever he wanted on the lot.

Lucas was almost pathologically shy. When he met the woman he would marry, film editor Marcia Griffin, it was months before she could extract his place of birth. "He would never volunteer anything about himself," she remembers.

With his fellow director, however, Lucas could talk movies, and Coppola recognized a kindred spirit. But after two weeks of watching his new friend struggle with *Finian's Rainbow*, Lucas decided he'd seen enough. Coppola was annoyed. "What do you mean, you're leaving?" he asked Lucas. "Aren't I entertaining enough? Have you learned everything you're going to learn?" He offered him a slot on the production. Lucas fell under Coppola's spell.

His new mentor had a major impact on Lucas. Coppola was always telling him he was a genius, building his ego. According to Marcia Lucas, who is now divorced from the director, "George was not a writer, and it was Francis who made him write. Francis said, 'If you're gonna be a filmmaker, you have to write.' He practically handcuffed George to the desk."

Their disparate styles were a source of friction. "My life is a kind of reaction against Francis's life," Lucas explained. "I'm his antithesis." Coppola was large and bulky, Lucas small and frail. Coppola was emotional, Lucas reserved. Coppola was collaborative to a fault. Lucas, a control freak, would have done everything—write, shoot, direct, produce, and edit—himself. No matter how little money Coppola had, he always acted like a man with more. No matter how much money Lucas had, he always acted like a man with none. Coppola referred to Lucas disparagingly as the "70-year-old kid." Of Coppola Lucas said, "All directors have egos and are insecure. But of all the people I know, Francis Ford Coppola has the biggest ego and the biggest insecurities."

Two years later, Coppola persuaded Lucas to help him start a new company, American Zoetrope, in San Francisco. "Francis saw Zoetrope as a sort of alternative, *Easy Rider* studio," said Lucas. "It was a way of saying, 'We don't want to be part of the Establishment.'" Marcia Lucas has a different take on Coppola's move from L.A. "I think Francis didn't want to be a small fish in a big pond," she says.

Meanwhile, Steve Ross had bought Warner–Seven Arts. Ted Ashley became the new head of the studio. Producer John Calley was named head of production. About a week after taking charge, Calley got a telegram that said, "Shape up or ship out." It was signed "Francis Ford Coppola, American Zoetrope."

Amused, Calley called to ask what the director was up to. Coppola shared his plans for Zoetrope and talked up Lucas. "George was like a younger brother to me," he says. "I loved him. Where he went, he went." In future years, after the *Star Wars* series made Lucas more successful, commercially, than his mentor would ever be, Coppola became embittered. "I'm the only one of George's friends who never had a piece of *Star Wars*," he says. "Once George went on, I went on. I had brought him along with me wherever I CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Excerpted from *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*, by Peter Biskind, to be published in April by Simon & Schuster; © 1998 by the author.


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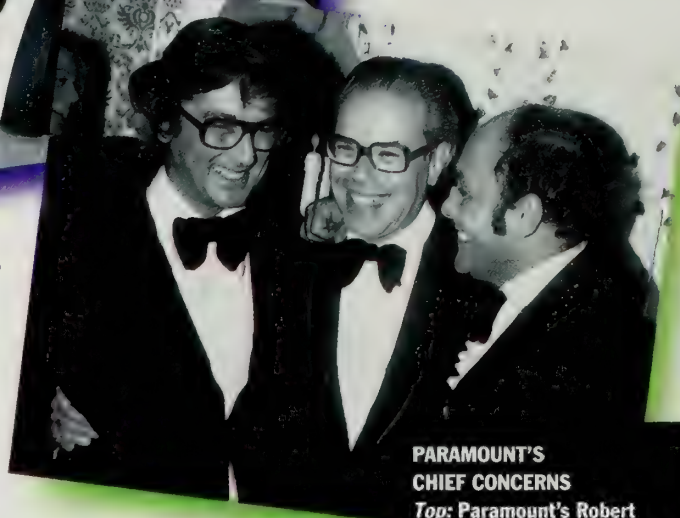
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Before hiring Bob Evans at Paramount, Bluhdorn commented, "The *caca* in charge there now is ninety years old. He saw *Alfie* and couldn't even hear it."

PARAMOUNT'S CHIEF CONCERNS ***Top:*** **Paramount's Robert Evans (far left) and wife Ali MacGraw in Beverly Hills in 1972 with future secretary of state Henry Kissinger.** ***Above:*** **Evans in 1973 with Charlie Bluhdorn (center), C.E.O. of Gulf & Western, and Paramount's Frank Yablans.**

chemical imbalance and had no problem breaking the law. He was a criminal." Indeed, there was a rank smell at Paramount in those days. Bluhdorn was under investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission throughout the 70s, and Evans was close to Hollywood's real Godfather, Sidney Korshak.

Bluhdorn's head of distribution was Frank Yablans. The son of a Brooklyn cabbie, he liked to say he graduated from the "Brooklyn Street Corner School of Economics." He had a huge ego. "Frank had the biggest Napoleonic complex of anyone short of Napoleon," says William Friedkin. But Yablans was tough, quick on his feet, and his sense of humor was wicked. He would think nothing of walking past a female employee and saying, "Nice tits today, honey." But he was forthright, direct—you knew where you stood with him.

Bluhdorn's 1966 hiring of Robert Evans had been a typically impulsive move. The novice executive had been an actor; he was devoid of qualifications. According to Evans's predecessor, Howard W. Koch Sr., the future executive had cozied up to Bluhdorn's French wife, Yvette. "He's gorgeous," she told her husband. "We've got to get a good-looking guy, real sexy, to run the company."

Paramount accounted for no more than 5 percent of Gulf & Western's revenues, and Bluhdorn may not have cared who ran it. He told Evans, "The Paramount *caca* in charge there now is ninety years old. He saw *Alfie* and couldn't even hear it."

Evans would one day crash and burn, but at 36 he had a permanent tan, his teeth dazzled, and his hair was as black as pitch. His voice, hoarse and gravelly, sounded as if he had swallowed ground glass. A dentist's son, Evans had been born on June 29, 1930, and had worked in his brother's clothing business. (When angry, Bluhdorn called his production chief "that pants cutter.")

Paramount bought Evans a house in Beverly Hills for around $290,000. He christened the place Woodland. The pool was egg-shaped; there were 100-foot eucalyptus trees, a centuries-old sycamore, more than 1,000 ornamental rose bushes—and high walls. Evans played tennis there with Jack Nicholson, Dustin Hoffman, Henry Kissinger, and Ted Kennedy.

Evans, who introduced Bluhdorn to women, liked female company—models, actresses, and other working girls. Often, in the mornings, when his housekeeper served breakfast in bed—black coffee and cheesecake—she put the girl's name on a piece of paper under Evans's plate to help him recall who she was.

On October 24, 1969, Evans wedded Ali MacGraw, the 31-year-old star of 1970's *Love Story*. Bart didn't like her. "Ali was one of these people who felt like she had to decorate herself like a 60s person," he says. "She was about as much a 60s person as Leona Helmsley. She was materialistic, self-aggrandizing, and basically would fuck any actor she played opposite of." On the surface, however, it appeare to be a storybook ma riage, a pairing of hanc some mogul and beaut ful leading lady.

In the light of late events, particularly Evans addiction to cocaine, is easy to underestimat him, but he was extreme ly effective for nearly decade. "You have no ide what a great min Evans was in thos days," says Friedkin.

Between Evans th pants cutter, the chen ically imbalanced Blul dorn, and the bullyin Yablans, Paramour was a loony bin of bi egos and bad temper But by 1971, *Rome and Juliet, The Oa Couple, Plaza Suit Rosemary's Baby,* ar *Love Story* had put the studio at th head of the Hollywood class.

The documentary *Woodstock* was suc a hit for Warner that Fred Wei traub enlisted a bunch of hippie roc ers who would drive across country ar give concerts while a crew filmed the antics. Later, to recut the film, whic was entitled *Medicine Ball Caravan* ar released in 1971, Weintraub summone Martin Scorsese, who was alreac known for his encyclopedic knowled of film, and his tendency to spit o words like machine-gun fire.

Scorsese—small and long-haired—a rived from New York in January 19 and immediately went into culture shoc "I had a really hard time adjusting L.A.," he recalls. "Driving, forget it The freeways terrified him. He used h Corvette—'60, white—on surface stree only. His asthma had worsened. "I nev really got much sleep at night because waking up coughing," he remembe "By the time I got past an attack in t middle of the night, took an asthma pi and fell into a really deep, peacef

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I have to fix my life.
Even if it kills me.

Jon Voight

THE FIXER

A SHOWTIME ORIGINAL PICTURE
WORLD PREMIERE: SUNDAY MARCH 8 8:00 PM (ET/PT)

SHOWTIME Presents A BARNSTORM Films Production A SOUTH SIDE Film JON VOIGHT "THE FIXER"
BRENDA BAKKE Supervising Music Producer SPENCER PROFFER Music by LEMMIE NIEHAUS
Director of Photography MICHAEL GOI Co-Executive Producer MARTIN TUDOR Executive Producer JON VOIGHT
Produced by HELEN BARTLETT TONY BILL CHARLES ROBERT CARNER Written and Directed by CHARLES ROBERT CARNER

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sleep, it was time to get up again. So I was always a little cranky."

Scorsese was going up and down in weight, partly due to the medication he was taking for asthma. Said Don Simpson, who met him at Warner, "What he was taking was basically speed. . . . One hit, you were just flying. I finally realized why he was so hyper, because he had the inhaler to his nose day and night, which is why he could stay up for days on end talking about movies and music. He had this rock 'n' roll head, knew every lyric and title. He understood music as a critical aspect of the *Zeitgeist* of the times."

Scorsese used an inhaler for asthma. Said Don Simpson, "One hit, you were flying. I realized why he was so hyper."

Brian De Palma, who would go on to create homages to Hitchcock such as *Dressed to Kill* (1980) and *Obsession* (1976), was one of Scorsese's few friends in L.A. They had met at N.Y.U. in 1965. De Palma, 29, was already a legend to struggling filmmakers; he had several independent features under his belt, including *Greetings* (1968) and *Hi, Mom!* (1970), which featured an actor named Robert De Niro.

When Weintraub called De Palma in 1970 and asked him to direct a picture for Warner called *Get to Know Your Rabbit,* the director joined the exodus to L.A. He dropped in on Jennifer Salt, a young actress he had worked with. (She happened to be the daughter of blacklisted screenwriter Waldo Salt, who wrote *Midnight Cowboy.*) Salt was staying with Jill Clayburgh, who was doing *Othello* at the Mark Taper Forum. Salt recalls, "We were all sitting on the beach, and I said, 'I'm going to move out here.' Brian said, 'Me too. Come on, let's take this town by storm.'"

The day after Bluhdorn hired Coppola to direct *The Godfather* in 1970, the director and his family celebrated by sailing for Europe on the *Michelangelo* with no more than $400 and Mona Skager's credit cards. He commandeered the bar, broke down the novel, and pasted pages all over the windows.

After Coppola's return, Al Ruddy and his associate producer, Gray Frederickson, discovered that Coppola was not as tractable as they had thought. For the film, the director wanted to maintain the novel's 1940s period setting, demanded a New York location shoot, and insisted on a bigger budget. Occasionally when Coppola finished a conversation with Evans, he pulverized the phone, beating it to pieces with the receiver.

Coppola didn't care about marquee names. Evans did, and as the budget rose, Evans cared more. To him, Coppola was a nobody, a *pisher.* Evans attempted to call all the shots but found he was unable to impose all his whims.

According to James Caan, Coppola wanted Caan for Sonny Corleone, Robert Duvall for Hagen, and Al Pacino for Michael. Pacino was anathema to Evans; he was unknown and short. Bluhdorn referred to him as "the Italian dwarf."

Who would play the don? Coppola wanted Marlon Brando, but Stanley Jaffe vowed that the star, known for driving pictures way over budget, would not be cast as long as he was head of Paramount. At this point the director appeared to have an epileptic fit, and dramatically collapsed in a heap.

Lucas advised Coppola: "Don't try to make this into one of your films. Just roll over and let them do it to you. Trying to win a game of poker with the Devil, they'll crush you, and you won't get the money you need to make the films we want."

In the fall of 1970, Coppola had met Scorsese at the Sorrento film festival. Everybody said that Francis looked like Marty's older brother. They became friends. In New York, Coppola dined at the table of Scorsese's mother and father in Little Italy. "My father's voice was recorded to listen to the accent," Marty recalled. "My mother was constantly giving him casting suggestions. One night at dinner she told him she wanted Richard Conte in the picture, and he put him in. Another time, she asked him how many days he had to shoot, and he said, 'A hundred days.' She said, 'That's not enough.' I said, 'Mom, don't get him terrified!'"

Eventually Coppola won the casting wars. "Four months later, after all this tension, I wound up with my cast, Brando and Pacino," Coppola says. "If I hadn't fought, I would have made a movie with Ernest Borgnine and Ryan O'Neal set in the 70s." But Coppola was exhausted. Recalls Bart, "Evans made Coppola's life miserable. He took up Francis's preparation time shooting fucking tests. Franci didn't have a chance to think about th movie, the locations."

The Godfather began production o March 29, 1971. Says Steven Kester the original first assistant director, "Frar cis was at the bottom of the abyss. Coppola struck the tough New Yor crew as indecisive. "Running a se means you gotta be the guy that make it go forward," says Kesten. "And it jus wasn't happening. Francis was alway having to be nudged along." During th scouting of a location on lower Fift Avenue, Francis disappeared into Polk' a hobby store, and spent the afternoo buying toys.

By the end of the first week, Coppo was behind. He rewrote the script i night and between setups, creating chao Coppola recalls, "I was in deep, dee deep trouble."

Every morning he would close th set and rehearse until noon, letting th crew wait. This left only half a day f actual shooting.

Frederickson—after overhearing a co versation between Ruddy and Evans warned Coppola that he was about t be replaced. But nobody wanted to b the one to fire him, and when he wo the Academy Award for writing *Patto* he somehow managed to talk Bluhdo into keeping him.

Gordon Willis, director of photogr phy on *The Godfather,* has said, "Fra cis's attitude is like, 'I'll set my cloth on fire—if I can make it to the oth side of the room it'll be spectacular.' Adds Willis, "You can't shoot a whc movie hoping for happy accidents."

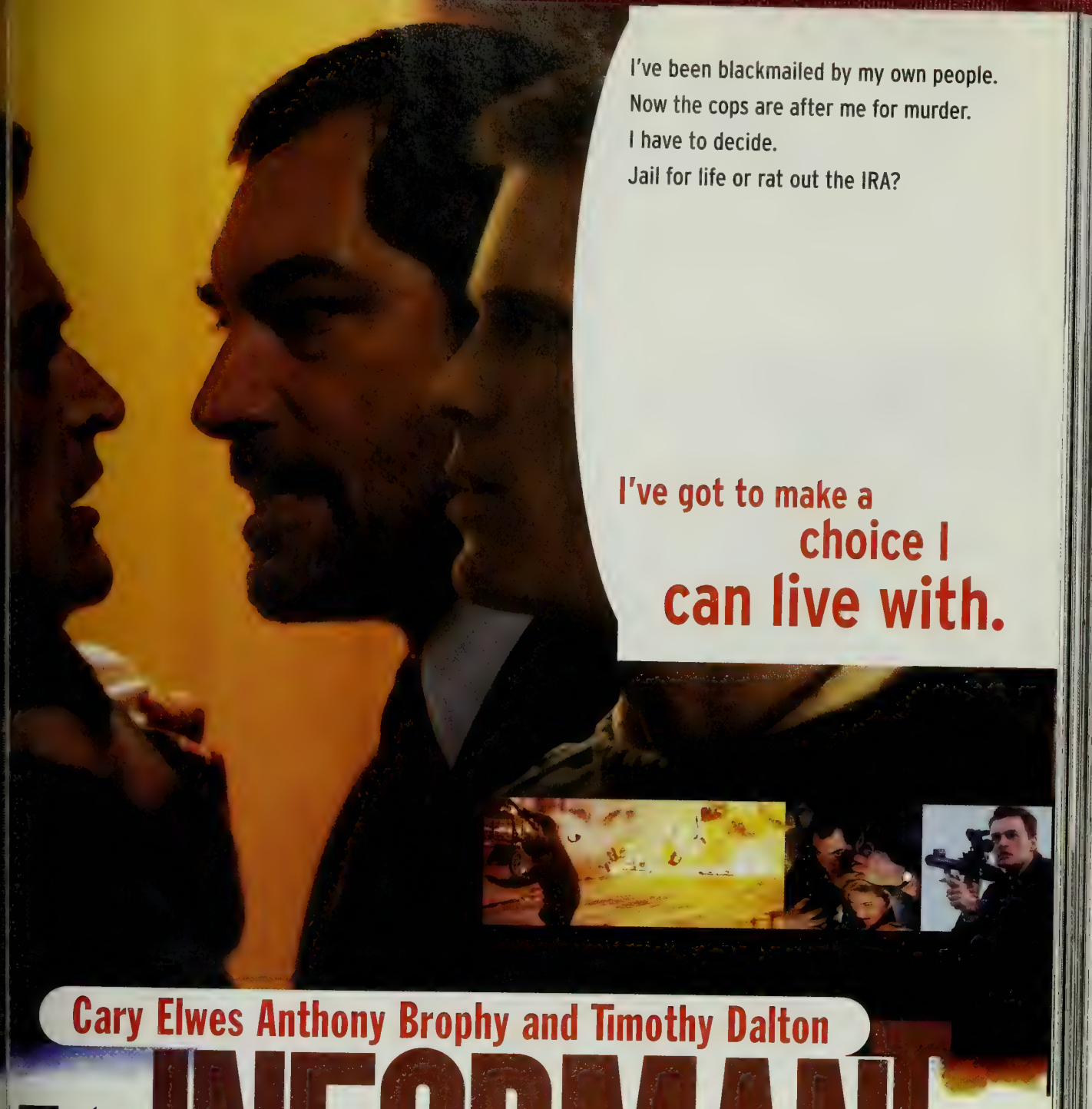
Scorsese dropped by the set wh Coppola was shooting the funeral of t don. He recalled, "Francis just sat dov on one of the tombstones in the gra yard and started crying."

After six months of shooting, *T Godfather* wrapped in September 197

The day arrived when Coppola, w had been editing in San Francis had to screen his cut for Paramou in L.A. Evans suffered from a bad ba and he had begun taking painkille among other drugs, for his distress. "I had a guy come in every day who ga him an injection of vitamins," says Ba "Who knows what it was."

On the day of the screening, Evan butler, David Gilruth, wheeled him i the Paramount screening room on a h pital bed. He wore fine silk pajamas a black velvet slippers with gold fox tass

Evans claims that after seeing the



I've been blackmailed by my own people.
Now the cops are after me for murder.
I have to decide.
Jail for life or rat out the IRA?

I've got to make a
choice I
can live with.

Cary Elwes Anthony Brophy and Timothy Dalton

THE INFORMANT

A SHOWTIME ORIGINAL PICTURE
WORLD PREMIERE: SUNDAY MARCH 15 8:00 PM (ET/PT)

TIME Presents A LEON FALK Production "THE INFORMANT" CARY ELWES ANTHONY BROPHY and TIMOTHY DALTON
c by THE POGUES AND SHANE MacGOWAN Executive Producers NICHOLAS MEYER and STEVEN-CHARLES JAFFE
Co-Produced by MORGAN O'SULLIVAN and TED ADAMS SWANSON Produced by LEON FALK
d on the Book "Field of Blood" by GERALD SEYMOUR Screenplay by NICHOLAS M Directed by JIM McBRIDE

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he told Bluhdorn, against Coppola's wishes, that the picture had to be longer. "The fat fuck shot a great film," Evans says he told Bluhdorn, "but it ain't on the screen."

Says Yablans, "Evans behaved very badly. He had everybody believing Coppola had nothing to do with the movie! Evans did not save *The Godfather,* Evans did not make it. That is a total figment of his imagination."

Up to the end, Coppola believed he had a flop. He was living in Caan's tiny maid's room in L.A., sending his per diem to his family. One day he went with an assistant to see *The French Connection,* directed by Friedkin, which had just opened. On their way out, the assistant raved about the movie they had just seen. Coppola said, "Well, I guess I failed. I took a popular, pulpy, salacious novel, and turned it into a bunch of guys sitting around in dark rooms talking."

"Yeah," came the reply. "I guess you did."

But when *The Godfather* was screened a week and a half later, Ruddy came out wreathed in smiles, saying, "Through the roof, baby, it's gonna be a monster hit!" The film opened in New York on March 15, 1972, during an unseasonably late snowstorm. After the premiere, Coppola fled to Paris to write. His friends called, saying, "*The Godfather*'s a huge hit." He'd answer, "Oh, yeah, great," and turn back to his work.

By January 1973, only 10 months after it opened, *The Godfather* became the biggest grosser of all time. And not only did the movie revive Paramount with a tremendous infusion of cash, it was a jolt of electricity for the industry.

Some months earlier, Coppola, joking with Evans and Ruddy, had asked for a Mercedes 600—the big stretch limo—if the picture hit $15 million. Evans had replied, "No problem at $50 million." Recalls Coppola, "When the picture had done a hundred million dollars, George Lucas and I walked into a Mercedes dealership in San Francisco and I said, 'We want to see a Mercedes 600.' The salesmen kept passing us along to other salesmen, because we had driven up in a Honda. They showed us a few sedans, and we kept saying, 'No, no! We want the one with the six doors.' So finally some young salesman took the order. I said, 'Send the bill to Paramount Pictures,' and they did."



edkin poked his head through the sunroof Coppola's Mercedes 600 stretch limo and quoted view of *The French Connection.*

MAKING CONNECTIONS From left: director William Friedkin with actors Gene Hackman and Fernando Rey on the Manhattan set of *The French Connection,* which won the Oscar for best picture in 1971. (Friedkin himself also won for directing.)

Truly the ugly duckling transforme into a swan, Coppola learned in tim to appreciate the favors of womer "For a long time I didn't want to b alone," he recalled. "The romances . . were pretty conventional, schoolbo kind of romances. . . . I had a coupl that were sort of the-most-beautiful-gir you-ever-saw kind of things. All of u when we're young, have that fantasy.

Back in San Francisc he began getting millio dollar checks in the m from Paramount. "I w . . . one of the first you people to become ri overnight," he said. Coppola had start to think of himself as Don Corleone. I even printed up matchbooks on whi was inscribed "Francis Ford Coppo *The Godfather.*"

Coppola was a boy at a table load with sweets; characteristically, he them all. The rush of power distract him from the artistic ambitions had held for so long. "It just inflam

I got the offer of a lifetime
in the Middle East...
or so I thought.
Now I've been beaten and jailed.
And they have my passport.

I've got to get out
of here. Any way
I can.



Treat Williams Stephen Lang

ESCAPE: HUMAN CARGO

A SHOWTIME ORIGINAL PICTURE
WORLD PREMIERE: SUNDAY MARCH 22 8:00 PM (ET/PT)

SHOWTIME Presents A NEUFELD/REHME Production A SIMON WINCER Film TREAT WILLIAMS STEPHEN LANG "ESCAPE: HUMAN CARGO" SASSON GABAI Supervising Music Producer SPENCER PROFFER Music by ERIC COLVIN Producers ANNE CURRY, DAVID FRANCO Director of Photography DAVID BURR Executive Producers MACE NEUFELD and ROBERT REHME Produced by NICK GRILLO Based on the Book Flight from Dhahran by JOHN McDONALD and CLYDE BURLESON Screenplay by WILLIAM MICKELBERRY & DAN VINING Directed by SIMON WINCER

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so many other desires," he explained.

Coppola bought a run-down, robin's-egg-blue, 28-room Queen Anne row house in San Francisco's posh Pacific Heights with a breathtaking view of the Golden Gate Bridge. A Warhol Mao print hung in the dining room. One room was devoted to electric trains. (Friends dubbed him "F. A. O. Coppola.") Another room contained a Wurlitzer jukebox full of rare Enrico Caruso 78s. A ballroom became a projection room with a Moog synthesizer, a harpsichord, and a collection of roller skates left over from *You're a Big Boy Now*. Francis greeted guests in a caftan. Like a newborn porpoise, he splashed in his clover-shaped, Moorish-style pool.



BEST CAVORTING ACTRESS Peter Bogdanovich in September 1976 with Cybill Shepherd. Their affair contributed to the breakup of the director's marriage to production designer Polly Platt.

Coppola re-created Zoetrope as a more traditional production company and housed it in the Sentinel Building, which he had bought from the Kingston Trio. His top-floor offices, designed by Dean Tavoularis, were fit for a Renaissance prince, with windows on three sides, intricate hand-crafted white-oak paneling, and inlay in the Art Deco style. A cupola ringed by a 360-degree mural depicted scenes from Coppola's movies under a deep-azure sky painted by Tavoularis's brother, Alex.

In the summer of 1972, agent Freddie Fields had a party that was attended by Coppola, Friedkin, and Bogdanovich. The first two left in Coppola's new Mercedes 600 stretch limo. Coppola had a bottle of champagne, which he spritzed over the car. They were all well lubricated, driving along Sunset singing "Hurray for Hollywood."

Bogdanovich had left the party at the same time, in a Volvo station wagon driven by his estranged wife, Polly Platt. By happenstance, the two vehicles pulled up alongside each other at a red light on the Strip. Friedkin stood and poked his head through the sunroof. Seeing Bogdanovich, he shouted, "The most exciting American film in 25 years!," quoting a review of *The French Connection*. Holding up five fingers, he added, "Eight nominations and five Oscars, including best picture!"

Not to be outdone, Bogdanovich stuck his head out the window of the Volvo and recited a line from one of his reviews, which he had apparently committed to memory: "*The Last Picture Show*: a film that will revolutionize film history." He added, "Eight nominations—and my movie's better than yours!"

Bogdanovich was a Sue Mengers client. "You underpriced she'd purr to her prey. "I'll get you your mil, honey."

Coppola thrust himself through the sunroof and bellowed, "*The Godfather*, $100 million!" Platt thought, These three guys are acting like assholes, but they know it. This is the way Hollywood is supposed to be.

At the Academy Awards on March 27, 1973, *The Godfather*—with 10 Oscar nominations—won only three: best picture, best actor (Brando), and best adapted screenplay (Coppola and Puzo). Coppola lost best director to Bob Fosse, for *Cabaret*. Attired in a red tuxedo, Coppola thanked everyone but Evans, whom he "forgot."

Evans was furious, but had other problems. One was clearly cocaine. Colleagues wondered why at meetings Evans was frequently seen rubbing his finger along his gums after putting his hand in his pocket. "I felt that he was abusing himself, and losing it," recalls Bart. "There were too many crises."

One was the *Godfather* sequel, which Puzo was already writing, despite Co pola's refusal to direct it. Coppola wa ed Martin Scorsese to do it instead. have no interest in the *Godfather* mo ies," he said to Bart at a breakfa meeting. "I'm tired of— I do somethi that people want, that they love, th beg me to do it. Then they start *attac ing* me, second-guessing me. That's w I like to cook. You work hard in t kitchen, usually people say, 'Umm that was good,' not 'There's mildew the rigatoni.'"

"Look, who was the star of *The Go father*?" asked Bart, laying it on thic "Brando? Pacino? . . . No, it was yo What does a star get?"

"A million," replied Coppola.

"If I can get you a million to wr and direct, will you do it?"

"O.K., you got a deal," said Copp la, reinvigorated. Bart called Bluhdo who yelled, "Yes, yes, close da teal. I id! Do id!" Adds Bart, "I think this w one of the times we couldn't find Bol

As soon as news of the deal leak out, Warner came after Coppola the $300,000 he owed. "Warner hurt in many ways," the director says. "Th threatened to put a cloud over 7


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*in collaboration with Institut Européen de Biologie Cellulaire
**Mechanisms demonstrated in vitro
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CHÂTEAU MARGOT Margot Kidder (far left) broke rules and hearts. The house she shared with Jennifer Salt on Nicholas Canyon beach was New Hollywood's home. Kidder is seen in 1981 with Rosie Schuster, Pat O'Bannon, Stuart Margolin, her sister Annie Kidder, and Alex Diakun.

Godfather Part II unless they had their development money returned to them. They truly acted like an 'evil empire.'"

Like Coppola, 33-year-old Peter Bogdanovich was thriving in the glow of the media spotlight that now surrounded successful directors. In New York, as a hungry young critic, Bogdanovich had attracted attention with his retrospectives on Hollywood directors held at the Museum of Modern Art. The programs, attended by many of the figures who would become New Hollywood mainstays, were influential. So were Bogdanovich's monographs, which director Robert Benton, who cowrote the screenplay for *Bonnie and Clyde,* described as "the closest thing we had to a textbook."

After *The Last Picture Show* and his blockbuster screwball comedy, *What's Up, Doc?,* Bogdanovich was riding high and clearly intoxicated with himself. As a junior executive put it, "The first time I met him, it was as if I were in the presence of God. I had to introduce myself, and he wasn't about to reciprocate and say his name. That might indicate that there was some doubt as to who he was."

Bogdanovich's agent was the very high-profile Sue Mengers, who had added directors to her roster of superstars, an indication of how prominent the men who made the films had become. "Oh, you underpriced baby," she'd purr to her prey. "Your agent is keeping you down. I'll get you your mil, honey."

Her muumuus and rose-tinted glasses contrasted sharply with Bogdanovich's candy-striped shirts with white collars and occasional ascots. The atmosphere at Mengers's parties was so heady that Bogdanovich's girlfriend, Cybill Shepherd, was apprehensive about attending. Peter had to drag her by the arm up Mengers's long driveway.

Bogdanovich's marriage to Polly Platt, the brilliant production designer whose collaboration had been instrumental in the artistic success of his films, hit the rocks during filming of *The Last Picture Show* when Bogdanovich started his affair with Shepherd. They set up housekeeping in a 7,000-square-foot hacienda, built in 1928, on Copa de Oro in Bel Air, just above Sunset. The hedges were neat, the pool crystalline. A Rolls-Royce was one of the five cars in the garage, although Bogdanovich hated to drive and once got lost inside the nearby U.C.L.A. campus when he tried to take a spin. One of his heroes, Orson Welles, was also in attendance, lodged in a bedroom—full of half-eaten dinners and cigar butts—off the study.

In early summer 1972, Coppola had called Bogdanovich to say that Charlie Bluhdorn had suggested starting a directors' company. It was an innovation which marked the zenith of filmmakers' power in the 70s. "We'd make pictures with complete autonomy, and eventually take [the company] public," Bogdanovich recalls Coppola explaining. Coppola and Bogdanovich played poker during the flight to New York to meet with Bluhdorn. Bogdanovich won $10 from his friend.

Friedkin, the third would-be member of the triumvirate, had never met Bluhdorn and was the first to arrive at the executive's Essex House suite. Within moments Bluhdorn leaned over and sniffed Friedkin's neck, asking, "Friedkin, vhat's dat shit you're verink?"

"Guerlain."

"Guerlain? Come here." He led Friedkin into his bathroom, where he had every aftershave in the world, including a Baccarat cut-glass bottle of Guerlain. Opening it up, he poured some on his own shoes. "Dis is vh[at] I do to Guerlain," he announced. "That was my introduction to Charlie, and he never got any saner as long as I knew him," Friedkin recalls.

After the others arrived, Bluhdorn began: the partners could make any picture under $3 million without submitting so much as a Kleenex to Paramount, which offered to capitalize the new company to the tune of $31.5 million. Billy Wilder commented, "This deal should win an Oscar."

But Bluhdorn had not yet told Yablans. Five minutes before a second meeting, Bluhdorn called his colleague. "You von't belief vhat I've done, impossible dream," he barked. "I put togedder a company, a directors' company, vid Francis, Friedkin, and Bogdanovich."

"Oh, that's great, that's great, Charlie, have a good time with it."

Later, Yablans joined the four men in Bluhdorn's office. "I think it's shit," he told them. "It's the worst, stupidest, dumbest idea I ever heard in my life. Why don't you just give 'em the company, Charlie?"

Yablans blamed Francis. "Coppola was playing Charlie like a Stradivarius," he says. "Forty percent of the whole idea was probably his. He was passing himself off as 'Poor little me all I wanna do is make my films,' was ing around in Puma sneakers and corduroy suit, CONTINUED ON PAGE


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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 238 while he was flying in on Learjets and using stretch limos."

But on August 20, 1972, Yablans found himself at a press luncheon at '21,' announcing the launch. "Coppola isn't interested anymore in filming a pomegranate growing in the desert," Yablans declared. He added that the three directors were "very commercial now."

Coppola invited both Friedkin and Bogdanovich to San Francisco. According to Friedkin, Lucas served the food while the three others talked among themselves. "He was still Francis's assistant, one of those guys hanging around him for scraps," says Friedkin.

Indeed, as Marcia Lucas had predicted, Coppola had become the Bay Area's one big fish, the source of all work and the fount of all pleasure. Alice Waters's innovative Chez Panisse was his commissary, and his home was a nonstop party. Says Marcia, "Ellie used to be around for half an hour or so, and then she'd go upstairs with the kids, and Francis would be feeling up some babe in the hot tub. I was hurt and embarrassed for Ellie, and I thought Francis was pretty disgusting."

Coppola's first film for the Directors Company was *The Conversation,* about a detective who uses high-tech sound equipment, falls into a paranoid funk, and self-destructs. Friedkin hated it. "It was a very obscure rip-off of Antonioni's *Blow-Up,*" he says. Bogdanovich agreed. "Francis said it was gonna be a Hitchcock kind of movie," he grumbles. "It didn't end up a Hitchcock kind of movie." But they were not allowed to veto one another's pictures.

On May 16, 1973, *Paper Moon*—Bogdanovich's Directors Company debut—opened to rave notices and lines at the box office. He was going from hit to hit, and becoming more insufferable all the time.

According to company bylaws, each director was entitled to a cut of the others' pictures. Coppola took $300,000 of *Paper Moon*'s profits, as did Friedkin, who had directed nothing. Yablans, who was looking for a chance to help destroy the amalgamation of the three big egos, says, "Once they took Peter's money, it was over. I called Peter and said, 'When are these guys going to make a movie? Christ! They have your money—what's going on here?' "

Bogdanovich was furious. But he was looking for projects to do with Shepherd. Ever since actor Timothy Bottoms had given her the Henry James novella *Daisy Miller,* she had been set on starring in it. Now Bogdanovich was ready. "She's so right for it—as though Henry James had her in mind when he wrote it," he said, with typical modesty. Bogdanovich agonized over whether the credits should read, "A Peter Bogdanovich film of Henry James's novella," or "Henry James's novella directed by Peter Bogdanovich," or "Henry James's *Daisy Miller,* a film by Peter Bogdanovich," or "Peter Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller,* from Henry James's novella."

"The next thing I knew was that Peter was making *Daisy Miller,* starring his girlfriend, who had no discernible acting ability," says Friedkin. "I thought, What the fuck is going on? Peter was just using this company as a vanity press. I reminded him that we had an agreement that we weren't gonna take projects that no other studio would make and dump them into this company.

"The Directors Company was an amazing thing and it was ultimately destroyed in a Machiavellian way by Yablans. He even let Cybill record an album called *Cybill Does It ... to Cole Porter,* and he put up a gigantic billboard for it on the Strip, all of which was part of his design to undo the company. Frank knew that if he encouraged Peter along that path . . . "

When *Daisy Miller* came out on May 22, 1974, it was killed by the same critics who had hailed Bogdanovich. One wrote that Shepherd was "a no-talent dame with nice boobs and a toothpaste smile and all the star quality of a dead hamster." *Daisy Miller* was the last straw for the Directors Company. "Billy said he wanted out," says Bogdanovich. "We said, 'You haven't even made a picture.' The company didn't work because Billy didn't want it to go on." Explains Friedkin, "I was not gonna put my next picture through a company that had a management trying to sabotage it. I withdrew."

"It's evil," cried Scorsese as Spielberg coaxed him into the ocean. "There's things with teeth. I don't do the water."

On Sundays, Fred Weintraub, the Warner executive who had advised George Lucas to put the freaks up front, had a regular open house. He entertained Hollywood hopefuls around his oversize water bed. During the summer of 1971, Brian De Palma went and Marty Scorsese went. One Sunday, just a few months after his dreams had been interrupted by the earthquake he had sworn was the Big One, Scorsese—by then divorced from his first wife, Larraine Brennan—ran into Sandi Weintraub. She was, as Don Simpson delicately put it, one of Freddy's "big-titted daughters."

They would live together for four years. "Marty was tempestuous, volatile, passionate," Sandi says. "He breathed, ate, and shat movies. We never ever looked at a movie and thought, Oh, wow, what a great career move for him. I told him about my dreams, and he would tell me about the movie he had seen the day before."

When Scorsese had moved to L.A., Brian De Palma introduced him to Jennifer Salt. She was making the rounds, looking for work and a place to live. One day she tested for John Huston's *Fat City.* All the actresses wore the same dress, and when Salt pulled it over her head, the armpits were still moist from the woman before her. Her name was Margot Kidder. "It was so tacky," recalls Salt. Kidder and Salt decided to go on a fast together and find a place to share. Donald Sutherland, the star of Robert Altman's hit *M*A*S*H,* knew of a house on Nicholas Canyon beach.

Kidder and Salt's lopsided A-frame was unfashionably far from the action, up the Pacific Coast Highway past Malibu. Tom Pollock, an attorney, had a shack there; actress Blythe Danner and producer Bruce Paltrow lived nearby. Producers Michael and Julia Phillips would move in next door, and writers John Gregory Dunne and Joan Didion lived up on the hill. The Salt-Kidder house, not to mention Salt and Kidder themselves, became a magnet for young Hollywood, a place where the aspiring artists could take a few tokes, drink red wine, trade John Ford stories, and stare at Salt, Kidder, and Salt's chum Janet Margolin sunbathing topless.

Salt was the princess from Sarah Lawrence. Kidder, from a considerably more déclassé background, had moved from one remote town to another. She

was cute and scrappy, funny, a tomboy, and enormously bright. Salt taught her how to dress. Kidder slept with nearly every man who crossed the threshold. She moved from crisis to crisis, broke hearts, and sued a producer. And she did drugs like they were going out of style.

"Out of the drug taking," Kidder says, "came a lot of creative thinking and breaking down of personal barriers and having a phony social persona. If that hadn't been the case, none of us would have developed our talents. But Steven Spielberg didn't take drugs, Brian didn't, Marty didn't, until later when he got into trouble with coke. The directors who ended up successful were very protective of their own brains."

Margie—with a hard *g* as she pronounced it—started seeing De Palma. They were passionately in heat, making it anywhere and everywhere, once in a closet during a party. At the time, Bobby Fischer was challenging Boris Spassky, and a chess craze had swept the beach. Brian taught Margie to play and would upset the board when she made a dumb move.

De Palma brought friends over, and Salt found herself cooking for him, Scorsese, Spielberg, screenwriters John Milius and David Ward, director Walter Hill, as well as actors Peter Boyle and Bruce Dern and others. They grilled steaks, ate spaghetti, tossed salads. Recalls Salt, "I cooked for these boys, gave lots of parties, made them take drugs and take their pants off and get down."

Nicholas beach was isolated; the only rules were the ones they made for themselves. If you wanted to be cool, you had to go skinny-dipping, which was especially hard on Scorsese, because the prednisone he took for his asthma had made his body blow up. He would sit on the sand fully dressed. Steven Spielberg, who didn't much like the water himself, would say, "C'mon, let's go in."

"No, no, no, it's very bad, it's evil. There's things out there you don't even want to know about . . . things with teeth. I don't do the water."

Scorsese had an old-world courtliness about him that endeared him to Kidder and Salt. One day he appeared in an immaculate white suit with a bouquet of flowers for each. Says Kidder, "Marty loved people trying new things, loved bravery of personal expression, and talked about it very eloquently, albeit very quickly. I don't remember many silly talks with Marty."

Recalls Scorsese, "The period from '71 to '76 was the best period. We couldn't wait for our friends' next pictures—Brian's next picture, Francis's next picture—to see what they were doing. Dinners in Chinese restaurants midday in L.A. with Spielberg and Lucas. My daughter named one of Steven's movies *Watch the Skies.*" (Spielberg renamed the film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* after that.)

After *THX 1138* flopped, George Lucas was at something of a crossroads. Coppola advised, "Don't be so weird, try to do something that's human. All you do is science fiction. Everyone thinks you're a cold fish. Make a warm and funny movie." Marcia was on his case, too. "After *THX* went down the toilet, I reminded George that I warned him it hadn't involved the audience emotionally," she recalls. "He always said, 'Emotionally involving the audience is easy. Anybody can do it blindfolded—get a little kitten and have some guy wring its neck.' All he wanted to do was abstract filmmaking. So finally George said to me, 'I'm gonna show you how easy it is. I'll make a film that emotionally involves the audience.'"

"I cooked for the boys," Jennifer Salt recalls, "gave parties, made them take drugs and take their pants off

Lucas recognized that Hollywood was ignoring an audience that was tiring of the steady diet of sex, violence, and pessimism doled out by the New Hollywood. "Before *American Graffiti,* I was working on basically negative movies," he said. "I became very aware of the fact that . . . the heritage we built up since the war [W.W. II] had been wiped out in the Sixties, and . . . now you just sort of sat there and got stoned. I wanted to preserve what a certain generation of Americans thought being a teenager was really about . . . from about 1945 to 1962."

He wanted to make a film about something he knew intimately, teenage rites of passage in a small town in the 50s—the hot rods, the top-10 musical wallpaper that was background for everything from drag racing to heavy petting. He set the plot in the early 60s, on the eve of the Vietnam War.

American Graffiti was an ensemble piece focusing on four young men. There was precious little in the way of plot. When Lucas's agent, Jeff Berg, sent his script to the studios, most of them turned it down. Bart was one of the executives underimpressed by Luc He thought, I can't imagine George recting a movie, because he's so n communicative, the ultimate passi aggressive. Finally, Universal showed terest. Production executive Ned Tan was intrigued by Lucas's tale of ne on wheels.

Tanen felt that Lucas needed a go producer. Coppola, whom Tanen oft ridiculed as "Francis the Mad," w the logical choice. Tanen gave Luca list of acceptable producers to cho from and Lucas immediately put check next to Coppola's name.

wasn't too happy about it; he had b determined to go out on his own, bu seemed all roads led back to Coppo who agreed immediately.

Coppola persuaded his old frie from Zoetrope Willard Huyck and G ria Katz to work on the script. "Fran got the movie made," says Huy "George would be at the airport, a he'd see two guys arguing, and he'd s 'They're the exact people I want for movie,' so he'd bring them in and Fr cis would say, 'George, I think we n real actors.'"

American Graffiti was shot in days, starting in the last week of J 1972. Lucas was worried about direct the actors. He hadn't the foggiest i what to say to them. Finally, he hire drama coach to work with them, w he confined himself to the came When Tanen made one of his infrequ visits to the set, Lucas ignored h "George has no social graces," s Katz. "And in his psychology, the s had no business other than writing checks. He didn't want to hear w they said, he didn't respect them."

Film editor Verna "Mother Cutt Fields, along with the Lucases, ass bled what became *American Graffiti* the garage of a house owned by C pola in Mill Valley. On the Movi Coppola had taped Xeroxes of milli dollar checks from Paramount for *Godfather.*

Scorsese was still struggling. "I an opportunist," he says. "I went every party, talked to everybod could to get a picture made. I looke people in terms of whether they co

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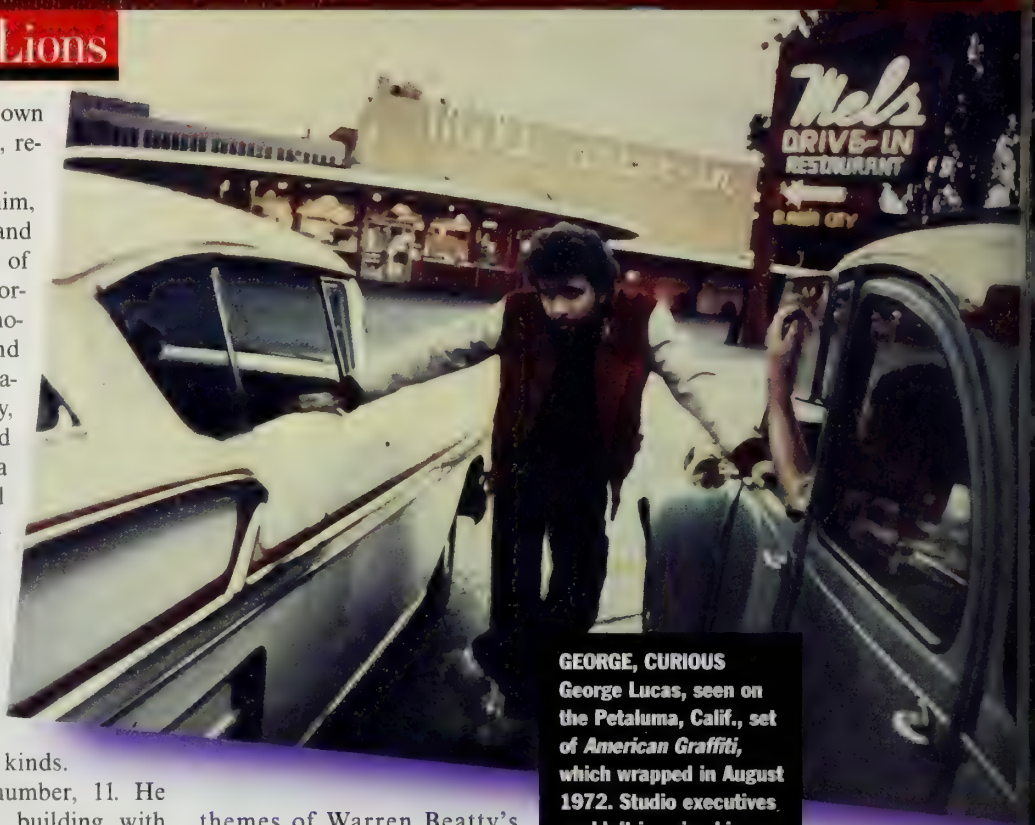
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help me. I had my own agenda. I was obsessive, relentless, ruthless."

Sandi took care of him, was a nurse, mother, and lover. "He needed a lot of attention," she says. Scorsese was filled with phobias and anxieties, and he began to see a therapist. He hated to fly, and during takeoff and landing he gripped a crucifix in his fist until his knuckles turned white. He was beset by superstitions, a melding of Catholicism and some arcana of his own making, forebodings drawn from dreams, signs, and portents of various kinds. He had an unlucky number, 11. He and Sandi lived in a building with numbered parking spaces. When the digits on a space added up to 11, he would walk around it. He wouldn't travel on the 11th of the month, avoided flights with the number 11, and wouldn't take a room on the 11th floor of a hotel. He had a gold amulet to ward off evil spirits, and carried a leather pouch filled with lucky charms in his pocket. Once, he lost the pouch and freaked out. Sandi had to buy more charms and fill a new pouch with them.

Scorsese needed Sandi, but the two fought constantly. "He got angry once and swept off the table with his arms and a glass went flying, and I was naked and I got some glass in my back. He never attacked me or hit me, but he was a wall puncher. And a phone thrower."



GEORGE, CURIOUS George Lucas, seen on the Petaluma, Calif., set of *American Graffiti*, which wrapped in August 1972. Studio executives couldn't imagine him working with actors. One called him "the ultimate passive-aggressive."

"Emotionally involving the audience is easy," said George Lucas. "Get a kitten and have some guy wring its neck."

Weintraub thinks that some of Scorsese's rage came from his father. "I remember his parents coming to visit, and his father said, 'Are you still seeing that funny doctor,' the therapist? And Marty said, 'Yeah, it's really helping me.' His father's face got really red and angry. He said, 'When are you gonna grow up and be a man?'"

Around the middle of 1971, Roger Corman gave Scorsese the chance to direct *Boxcar Bertha*. A variation on the themes of Warren Beatty's controversial *Bonnie and Clyde*, it was a Depression-era drama about a persecuted union organizer (David Carradine) and a boxcar-riding bimbo (Barbara Hershey). Said Don Simpson, "Roger, I swear, didn't know what picture Marty was making. All he cared about was 'Is Barbara gonna, like, show tits?'"

Scorsese was embarrassed by the film. He showed it to John Cassavetes, who said, "Nice work, but don't fucking ever do something like this again."

While Scorsese's agent, Harry Ufland, shopped around Scorsese's next project, *Mean Streets* (then titled *Season of the Witch*), Scorsese revised and revised the script. Film critic Jay Cocks, Scorsese's friend and occasional writing collaborator, renamed it, borrowing a phrase from Raymond Chandler. Cocks's wife, Verna Bloom, an actress, introduced Scorsese to Jonathan Taplin, an ex–road manager for Bob Dylan and the Band. Taplin told Scorsese he could raise the money to produce it.

Scorsese met Robert De Niro at a dinner party. As it turned out, they had grown up within a few blocks of each other and hit it off immediately.

De Niro, who was very serious about acting, didn't hang
didn't make small t
He was so shy tha
was hard for him to
work. "You couldn't get De Niro an
ed," recalls casting director Nessa
ams. De Niro read *Mean Streets*
eventually agreed to play the characte
Johnny Boy, the "funny in the he
neighborhood nut. Harvey Keitel wo
play Charlie, the Scorsese surrogat
character torn between the church
the Mob.

Most of the movie's interiors w
shot in L.A. in the fall of 1972. (The
teriors and some other key scenes
been shot earlier, during six days
New York.) "In order to get the pic
made I had to learn how to mak
movie," says Scorsese. "I didn't le
how to make a movie in film sch
What you learned in film school wa
express yourself with pictures
sound. But learning to make a mov
totally different. That's the people
the production board, the schedule.
means you gotta get up at five in o
to be there, you gotta feed the peopl

After a screening of the rough cu
Mean Streets, Sandi, Scorsese, De N
and a few others repaired to a res
rant for what Weintraub assu
would be a group dissection of the
But De Niro and Scorsese disappe
into the men's room for two and a
hours and hashed it out between th
selves. Says Weintraub, "What M
and Bob did together, they dic


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private. Definitely no women allowed."

Helping one another was a deeply ingrained habit among New Hollywood filmmakers. Nevertheless, the flames of competitiveness burned hot and deep, if not all that visibly. As Scorsese puts it, "There was always a fine line, where maybe one person was getting more attention than the other. But if the person who's getting less attention sees your rough cut, he could steer you in a negative way on purpose. Without even knowing it. Because of the jealousy."

"Brian never believed he was as successful as Francis or George. That made him very uncomfortable," adds George Litto, who produced for De Palma later in the decade. De Palma advised Scorsese to get rid of one of the best scenes in *Mean Streets,* the improvisation between De Niro and Keitel in the back room of the club. He said, "It's just wasting time. Take it out." Scorsese did, but Cocks told him to put it back, and he did.

American Graffiti previewed in Lucas territory, at the Northpoint Theater in San Francisco, on January 28, 1973. Tanen flew in, but appeared to be in a black mood.

Tanen discounted the audience's extremely positive response. This place, he thought, is filled with Lucas's friends. He cornered producer Gary Kurtz and told him, "This film is in no shape to show to an audience. You should have shown it to us first. I went to bat for you, and you let me down." Wheeling around to face Coppola, he continued, angrily, "I'm very disturbed. We have a lot to do."

"What are you talking about?" Coppola asked, his voice shaking with anger. "Didn't you just see and hear what we all just saw and heard? What about the laughter?"

"I've got notes. We'll have to see if we can release it."

"You'll see if you can *release* it?" roared Coppola, apoplectic. "You should get down on your knees and thank George for saving your job. This kid has killed himself to make this movie for you. And he brought it in on time and on budget. The least you can do is thank him for that." Coppola recalls whipping out a checkbook, and offering to buy the picture from Universal on the spot, saying, "If you hate it that much, let it go, we'll set it up someplace else and get you all your money back." Tanen abruptly dashed to his limo and left for the airport. He thought Coppola was grandstanding.

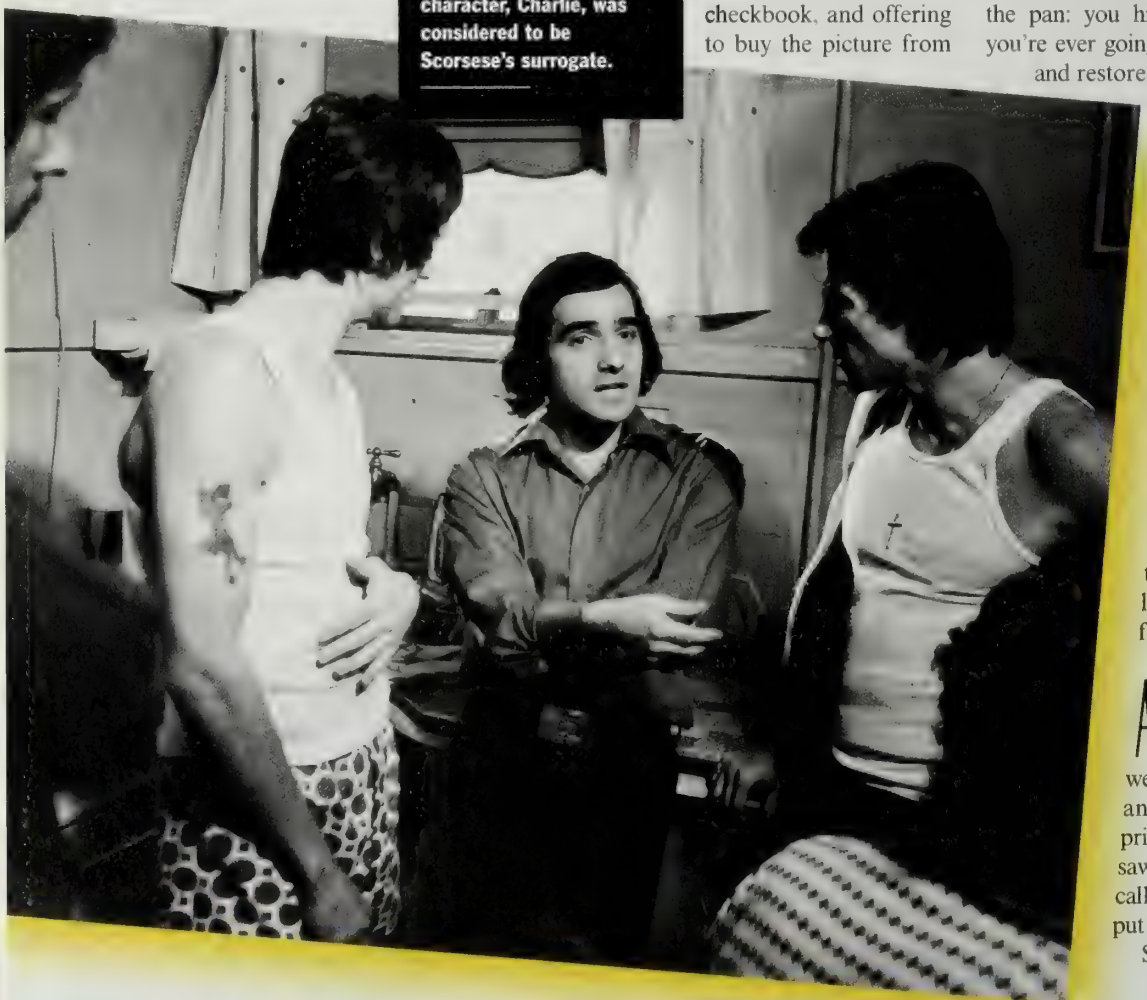
After it was all over, Lucas called Huyck and Katz, devastated. He said, "I don't know what to do, this picture—people are responding off the wall, and they keep telling me they're going to put it on television." But he was pleased with Coppola. He says now, "Francis really stood up to Ned. I was pretty proud of him."

American Graffiti opened on August 1, 1973. It broke house records, and ultimately earned a phenomenal $55,123,000 in rentals. The picture's direct cost was $775,000, plus another $500,000 for prints, ads, and publicity—a 4,300 percent return on the investment. "To this day, it's the most successful movie ever made," Tanen now bombastically claims. Lucas's cut came to about $7 million, $4 million after taxes. For years, the Lucases had lived on a combined income of $20,000 a year or less. Yet for Lucas, who made few significant changes in his lifestyle, the glass was still half empty. Says Marcia Lucas: "He had this idea of being a flash in the pan: you hit it once and that's all you're ever going to have." They did buy and restore an old Victorian in San Anselmo. Marcia called it Parkhouse. George was only 29 years old.

Lucas still wanted to be taken seriously as an artist, like Coppola and Scorsese. He told Billy Friedkin that *American Graffiti* was an American version of Fellini's *I Vitelloni* and he wondered why none of the critics had picked up on it. Friedkin thought, My God, that's what this guy really thinks he's done? He's filled up with himself.

After *Mean Streets* was completed, Scorsese got on a plane and went up to San Francisco and showed Coppola a print. "That's when Francis saw De Niro," Scorsese recalls. "And immediately he put him in *Godfather II.*"

Scorsese found Coppola



STREET SCENE Martin Scorsese (center) with Robert De Niro (left) and Harvey Keitel on the set of *Mean Streets,* which was shot—mostly in Los Angeles—in the autumn of 1972. Keitel's character, Charlie, was considered to be Scorsese's surrogate.


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enveloped in a cloud of sycophants who were fiercely jealous of outsiders. One, says Sandi Weintraub, would follow two steps behind him into the bathroom. "I don't think Francis could fart without him catching it," Weintraub says.

Scorsese and Taplin took *Mean Streets* to Cannes in May. "Marty, Bobby, and I were introduced to Fellini," recalls Taplin. "When his distributor came into the room to pay homage to the maestro, Fellini said, 'Ah, you should buy his film, it's the greatest American film in the last 10 years.' He hadn't even seen it."

With a potential foreign sale, Taplin was in an expansive mood. He invited everyone for lunch to Le Moulin de Mougins, a four-star restaurant in the hills above Cannes. De Niro was there, with his female companion of the moment. "Bobby always had girlfriend trouble," says Taplin. "He picked these incredibly strong girls, top chicks, always black, and then he'd fight with them all the time. They would always be in tears the next morning, and he would buy them some perfume."

Scorsese, Weintraub, and De Niro and his girlfriend were in the middle of an extraordinary meal when a bee the size of a small hummingbird buzzed the table. Sandi tried to ignore it, but finally called the waiter over and asked him to do something. The waiter flicked his towel at the bee, which dropped stone dead into De Niro's girlfriend's water glass. She became hysterical, exclaiming loudly, "He killed the bee! A living thing! I can't believe this guy killed the bee!"

"Will you can it?" said De Niro, annoyed.

"What do you mean? You're gonna just let him kill this bee?"

"It's just a fucking bee! Will you shut the fuck up?"

"Why are you talking to me like that?" They started screaming. Finally De Niro said, "Why don't you take a fucking hike?"

Mean Streets premiered at the New York Film Festival in the fall of 1973. "We were broke, beyond broke, really busted," remembers Sandi. "Harry Ufland gave me his credit card so I could buy one skirt for the interviews, and I had to wash it every night, iron it on the floor. The night it opened was one of the most exciting events of my life. Marty got a standing ovation."

Pauline Kael was enthusiastic in *The New Yorker.* "Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets* is a true original for our period, a triumph of personal filmmaking," she wrote, and called it "probably the best American movie of 1973." But *Mean Streets* didn't exactly burn up the box office. Says Taplin, "Warner did a terrible job distributing *Mean Streets.* We made *bubkes.*"

After a screening of *Mean Streets,* De Niro and Scorsese disappeared into the bathroom. "What they did together," says a friend, "they did in private. Definitely no women allowed."

"When I first heard about Steven Spielberg, he was already a Hollywood guy, absolutely part of the system without even a second thought, not a drop of rebellion in him," says screenwriter Matthew Robbins, who became a close friend of the young director's. "The sensibility of the work was always the most conservative. One of the TV things he made was a rip-off of *THX,* all these people running around in white pajamas in tunnels through a long lens. George Lucas used to grump about the fact that some Hollywood slickie had ripped him off for a TV show. We were all appalled. Who could it be? It was Steven!"

Like Scorsese, Spielberg had lots of phobias—fear of elevators, roller coasters, airplanes, and so on. If anyone looked at him sideways, he got a nosebleed. You name it, he was afraid of it. He had no interest in anything but movies—not art, books, music, politics. Screenwriter Kit Carson ran into him at a party in the fall of 1968 right after the Democratic convention. "Everybody was up, the revolution was about to happen—burn it all down—that sort of thing," he remembers. "All Steve was interested in was trying to figure a way to throw a camera off a building and rig it with gyroscopes so that it wouldn't spin out of control as it went down. . . . I said, 'This kid's fucked. He's lost in the ozone, talking about the Twilight Zone.'"

Spielberg, who had spent several years directing television, had met Lucas, who had taken him to Coppola's office at Warner. "I saw in Francis's eyes somebody who did not distinguish between old and young, simply between talented and not," Spielberg recalls. "He was producing for George, and to be in his circle meant a chance to direct a movie. You thought, Maybe here's somebody who's going to open it up for all of us. But he only opened it up for George. In Francis's eyes, and also in George's, I was an outsider working inside the system."

Spielberg directed *Duel,* a movie-of-the-week, for Barry Diller at ABC. It aired November 13, 1971, and got a lot of notice. Recalled Don Simpson, "The media were saying all these things about this kid who made *Duel,* and then Marty and Brian would say, 'Well, what he did wasn't so extraordinary.' There was a little envy."

In 1973, Spielberg directed *The Sugarland Express,* with Goldie Hawn. In most cases it is the producer who pressures the director to make his picture more commercial. In this instance, Spielberg suggested that the film might make more money if the main characters survived in the end. Producers David Brown and Richard Zanuck vetoed the idea.

After *Duel,* Spielberg had started making the trek to Nicholas beach. "Sometimes everybody slept in sleeping bags on the floors," he recalls, "or on the beach on warm nights. It was as if a kind of movie-brat wave was starting to amass out at sea. One day I got there late, walked onto the beach, and everybody was buried in the sand, just their heads sticking out. It was like they had become future lobby cards, head shots."

Spielberg gawked at the topless trio of Salt, Kidder, and Margolin. "I had never seen anything like that before," he continues. "Even my sisters covered up. It was the first time I really felt connected with the flower-child generation."

Spielberg, who was emotionally still a teenager (he subsisted on Twinkies and Oreo cookies, slept in white crew socks and white T-shirts), was smitten with Kidder, although they never actually had an affair. "We were out at Stanley Donen's beach house, and Steve showed up with Margot," recalls Willard Huyck. "She was wearing this white flowing dress. We looked over, and she was lying next to him on the sand, but she had pulled the dress all the way up so she could tan herself. She didn't have any underpants on. Steve went beet red. He went


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CLEAN STREETS Twenty-nine-year-old Steven Spielberg sets up a shot during filming of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* in December 1976. A few years earlier he had subsisted on Twinkies and Oreos.

Spielberg was just desperate to be cool, friends recall. He wore "ridiculous pants with thousands of zippers."

'Margot!' He was really embarrassed."

Spielberg immediately attached himself to De Palma, a lady-killer with attitude to spare. Spielberg appreciated both qualities. He started wearing a safari jacket, De Palma's trademark garb. Eventually, he moved on to Scorsese, listening to him with the same rapt attention with which he absorbed De Palma's opinions. Auteurism was foreign to Spielberg; the idea of movies as personal expression was novel. "He didn't want to be the son of Jean-Luc Godard," recalls Carson. "He wanted to be the son of Sid Sheinberg. He was just so different from Coppola and Scorsese and John Milius." Adds Milius, "Steven was the one who ran out to buy the trades. He was always talking grosses."

Remembers Kidder, "That was why Steven was in awe of them. He was more innocent of spirit and less complicated than Brian or Marty. He was much more normal than we were. Whatever trauma he went through because his parents got divorced he adjusted well to. He was never addicted or excessive. With Steven, what you saw was what you got." He didn't even do drugs. "I never took LSD, mescaline, coke, or anything like that," he said. "But I went through the entire drug period. . . . I would sit in a room and watch TV while people climbed the walls."

Kidder tried to see to it that Spielberg didn't embarrass himself, but it was difficult. He was just desperate to be cool, but he didn't know how. He bought cowboy boots, perhaps to make himself seem taller, and was the kind of guy who wore bell-bottom blue jeans with a crease. "They had thousands of zippers," recalls Huyck. "They were the most ridiculous-looking pants."

Spielberg dedicated himself to parsing the culture. "Every month he read all the magazines, from *Tiger Beat* to *Esquire* to *Time* to *Playboy*," says Milius. "He wanted to become an expert on what was hip, how people were thinking."

Spielberg had little experience with women, and when he finally got a girlfriend, a stewardess he met while he was doing *The Sugarland Express*, Kidder taught him about the birds and the bees. "I sat him down and went, 'O.K., Steven, here's how you do it—you don't wear your socks and your T-shirt to bed. Get something besides the Twinkies in the fridge, and read her Dylan Thomas.'"

While *The Conversation* was in post-production, Coppola left the Bay Area to begin *Godfather II*, which commenced principal photography on October 23, 1973, in Lake Tahoe. The shoot was an ordeal for Eleanor Coppola, who cried a lot. She later wrote that her life was complicated by the "fresh crop of adoring young protégées waiting in the wings" for her husband. Francis Coppola had known Melissa Mathison, who would later earn an Oscar nomination for writing *E.T.* and marry Harrison Ford, since she was a kid of 12. He had watched her grow up into a tall woman—about five feet eight. She was thin, flat-chested, and flashed a lot of gum when she smiled, but she was also droll and self-assured. She worshiped Coppola and he used to say, "She's the greatest thing in bed I've ever had." The liaison, however, displeased Coppola's parents, who were sometimes on the set.

When the production got to New York, Sixth Street between Avenues A and B was dressed to look like the 20s. Coppola wanted to be able to, say, talk to the cinematographer three blocks away, so he had the street wired for sound. One day, according to Gray Frederickson, he got into a fight with his parents over Mathison. "What do you mean carrying on with that girl?" yelled Italia Coppola. "I'll carry on with anyone I want to carry on with," retorted Coppola, furious. "It's none of your business. I'm a grown man!" The sounds of this battle were carried over the speakers, to the amusement of the crew.

In 1973, Richard Zanuck and David Brown paid $175,000—pre-publication—for the movie rights to *Jaws*, a novel by Peter Benchley. Spielberg, looking for something to do, was hanging out

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Zanuck's office one day in June of 1973. As Spielberg has told the story, "[I] swiped a copy of *Jaws* in galley form, took it home, read it over the weekend, and asked to do it."

But after Zanuck and Brown gave him the nod, Spielberg developed reservations, which he expressed at a dinner with Brown and his wife, *Cosmopolitan* editor Helen Gurley Brown, at the Spanish Pavilion in New York. He worried that the project was too commercial. Spielberg recalls, "I didn't know who I was. I wanted to make a movie that left its mark . . . on people's consciousness. I wanted to be Antonioni, Bob Rafelson, Hal Ashby, Marty Scorsese. I wanted to be everybody but myself."

"There are two categories, films and movies," Spielberg explained. "I want to make films."

"Well, this is a big movie, a big movie," Brown replied. "It will enable you to make all the films you want!"

When *The Sugarland Express* came out in April of 1974, the reviews were enthusiastic. Kael called Spielberg "a born entertainer" and his movie "one of the most phenomenal début films in the history of movies." But, despite the accolades, the picture flopped.

Spielberg wanted a hit. He thought that *Jaws* could be reanimated with a New Hollywood approach. But he didn't much like Benchley's script. He said that when he read the book he rooted for the shark. There had to be people to root for. He asked John Byrum, a kid who had just gotten into town, to do a rewrite. Byrum recalls, "Steven was sitting on the floor of his bungalow playing with a toy plastic helicopter. Battery-operated. It flew around in circles. I start telling him my notions about the script, and he said, 'Oh, great idea!' Like a 12-year-old. Then he said, 'I gotta have my think music on,' so he put on this James Bond album soundtrack."

After Byrum passed on the project, Pulitzer Prize–winning playwright Howard Sackler wrote a draft that solved some problems, but by no means all. With the beginning of principal photography only weeks away, Spielberg persuaded Zanuck and Brown to hire his friend screenwriter Carl Gottlieb. He also secured the services of Verna Fields. She was a great favorite of Tanen's, and Spielberg may have thought she could protect him from the kind of problems Lucas had encountered with the executive during *American Graffiti*. Spielberg was certainly not above such calculations. He had hired Lorraine Gary, Mrs. Sidney Sheinberg, to fill the small part of Roy Scheider's wife, a bold move, politically.

Although Spielberg had welcomed big-time celebrity Goldie Hawn to *The Sugarland Express,* the star had failed to boost the picture's take at the box office, and this time he resisted when the studio suggested Charlton Heston and Jan-Michael Vincent as stars who could sell *Jaws.* Said Spielberg, "I wanted somewhat anonymous actors to be in it so you would believe this was happening to people like you and me." Zanuck and Brown suggested Robert Shaw, who had played in *The Sting,* for Quint. Richard Dreyfuss, a struggling actor who is reputed to have carried a scrap of lined yellow notepaper in his back pocket bearing the names of all the casting directors who had ever rejected him for a role, turned down *Jaws* at first. "Then I saw *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz,* and I was just so freaked out, I thought my performance was so terrible, that I called Steven and, begged for the job. We started the film without a script, without a cast, and without a shark."

Recalls Spielberg, "In Francis's eyes, and also in George's, I was an outsider working inside the system."

At some point during pre-production, Spielberg took his friends Lucas and Milius to see the shark in progress in a hangar in North Hollywood. When he agreed to do *Jaws,* Spielberg thought he could just hire a shark wrangler to make a great white do a few pirouettes in the water. That proved to be wishful thinking, to say the least, and now he was faced with this giant creation, dubbed "Bruce" after Spielberg's lawyer, Bruce Ramer.

The polyethylene cast was half done, unpainted, just a gray, submarine-like phallic thing with patches on the side, about 26 feet long. It was so large that Milius said, "They're overdoing it." Spielberg replied, "No, they aren't, the ichthyologist said this is exactly what it would look like." Milius got excited and said Spielberg was making the ultimate aquatic samurai film.

Lucas regarded the storyboard, looked up at the big shark, and said to Spielberg, "If you can get half of this on film you will have the biggest hit of all time." Spielberg, meanwhi grabbed the controls and made t enormous mouth open and shut with grinding noise, like an outsize be trap. Lucas climbed the ladder, wait for the jaws to part, and stuck his he inside.

Spielberg closed it on him. Mil thought, My God, we're like hum tacos compared with that thing. Spi berg tried to open the mouth, but was stuck. After Lucas managed to tricate himself, the filmmakers jump into the car and split. They knew th had broken something that cost a lot money.

After six months in pre-production *Jaws,* Spielberg was ready to p out. "I stayed up at night fantasizi about how I could get myself off t picture short of dying," he says. "I w out of my mind for a while. So I we to Sheinberg and Zanuck and Bro and said, 'Let me out of this film.' Di pulled me aside and called me a knu lehead, said, 'This is an opportunity a lifetime. Don't fuck it up.' And S said, 'We don't make art films at U versal, we make films like *Jaws.* If y don't want *Jaws,* you should work sor where else.' "

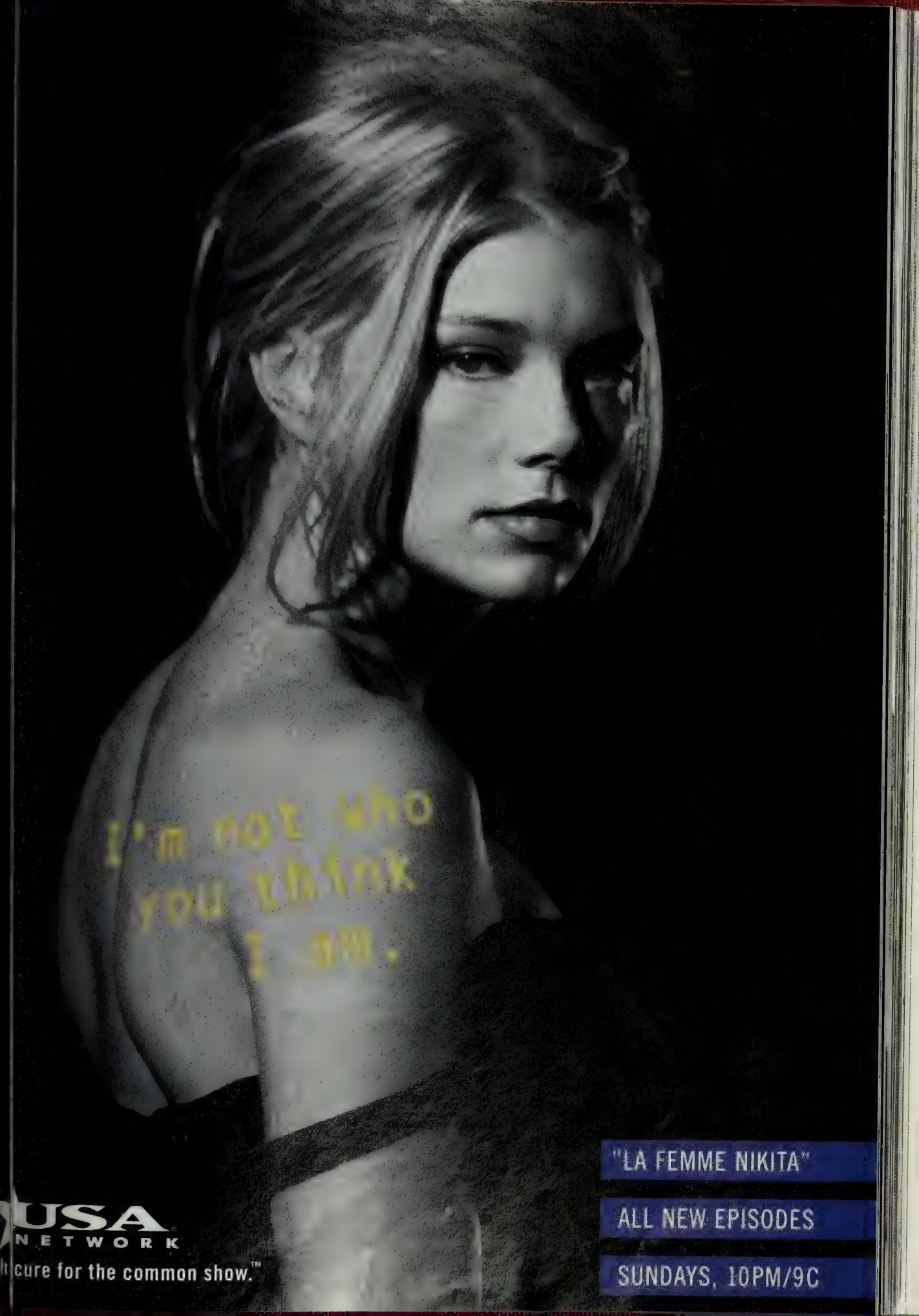
On May 2, Spielberg was ready to gin. The budget was $3.5 million.

Watching the first rushes was "lik wake," recalled De Palma, who was v iting the set. "Bruce's eyes crossed, a his jaws wouldn't close right."

On the third day, one of the th sharks sank. The crew took to referri to the movie as "Flaws." The prod tion shut down several times to acco modate repairs on the sharks. Delay f lowed delay. Spielberg was lucky if got one shot in the morning and anoth in the afternoon.

As Roy Scheider puts it, "We had much time that we became a little rep tory company. You had a receptive rector and three ambitious, inventive tors. Dreyfuss, Shaw, and myself wo have dinner and improvise scenes. G lieb would write them down, and next day we would shoot. In a strar way, the inability of the shark to fu tion was a bonus."

Spielberg was under an enorm



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amount of pressure. He brought his own pillow with him from home and put celery in it, a smell he found comforting. He had no time for anything but work.

As Spielberg fell farther and farther behind, the budget kept creeping up. Worse, the studio was unhappy with the dailies. At one point, Sheinberg arrived at the film's Martha's Vineyard location from L.A. He had dinner at Spielberg's house, and afterward the director excused himself and went off into a corner with Gottlieb to work on the script. Sheinberg thought, My God! This is the way this is being done?

The next day, Sheinberg watched Spielberg shoot. During a break, Sheinberg took the opportunity to say, "I will back you in [either of] two decisions. If you want to quit now, we will find a way to make our money back. If you want to finish the movie, you can."

Spielberg wanted to stay.

Shooting on the Vineyard ended in early October 1974. The original 55-day schedule had metastasized into 159 days, five and a half months. The final budget was about $10 million, an overage of more than 150 percent. Spielberg was humiliated: "It was a *Schande*, a scandal for the neighbors, meaning Mr. Sheinberg and Mr. Wasserman."

Spielberg spent the night in Boston waiting for his morning flight to L.A. He thought his career was over. He recalled, "That night I had a full-blown anxiety attack, something that I had staved off for eight or nine months. I thought I was going crazy. I was lying in bed alone, sweating, heart palpitations. If I got out of bed, I'd pass out. I was a complete wreck."

Postproduction of *Godfather II* was affected by the love-hate relationship between Coppola and Evans. Evans claims that Coppola called him and begged for help. As Richard Sylbert, a veteran production designer who became head of production at Paramount, puts it, "At first, Francis told Bob Evans, 'Don't ever darken my toilet paper again.' But Francis is very good at collecting it, not very good at putting it all together. He got scared. Bob had to go up there."

According to Coppola, "It was in my deal that Evans have nothing to do with it, and he didn't. . . . He wasn't involved one iota in *Godfather II*."

When the Academy Awards came around on April 8, it was a sweep for Coppola. He won three Oscars himself. *Godfather II* won six. Francis thanked everyone on earth, except Evans. When Evans went over to congratulate the director, Coppola said, "Jesus, Bob, I'm so sorry. I can't believe what an idiot I am—I forgot to thank you. Again."

Jaws began to preview in the spring. It sneak-previewed in Dallas on March 26, at the Medallion Theater. Spielberg was standing in the back, by the door, nervously flicking his eyes between the screen and the audience. The scene in the beginning, where the boy on the raft is killed, had just gone by when a man in the front row got up and broke into a run, heading toward the director. Alarmed, Spielberg thought, My walkout has become a run-out! He must really hate it. The man reached the lobby and threw up all over the carpet, went to the bathroom, and returned to his seat! Said the director, "That's when I knew we had a hit."

The final budget for *Jaws* was about $10 million. "It was a *Schande*," said Spielberg, "a scandal for the neighbors, meaning Mr. Sheinberg and Mr. Wasserman."

Really large openings involving several hundred theaters or more were reserved for stinkers, enabling studios to recoup their expenses before a picture died. But Universal opened *Jaws* in more than 400 theaters, on June 20, 1975. "My secretary handed me this piece of paper [noting what she had been told] over the telephone . . . and said, 'Here's the opening figures.' And I just stared at this number," recalled Spielberg. "Then I kept waiting for the next weekend to drop off, and it didn't—it went up and it went up."

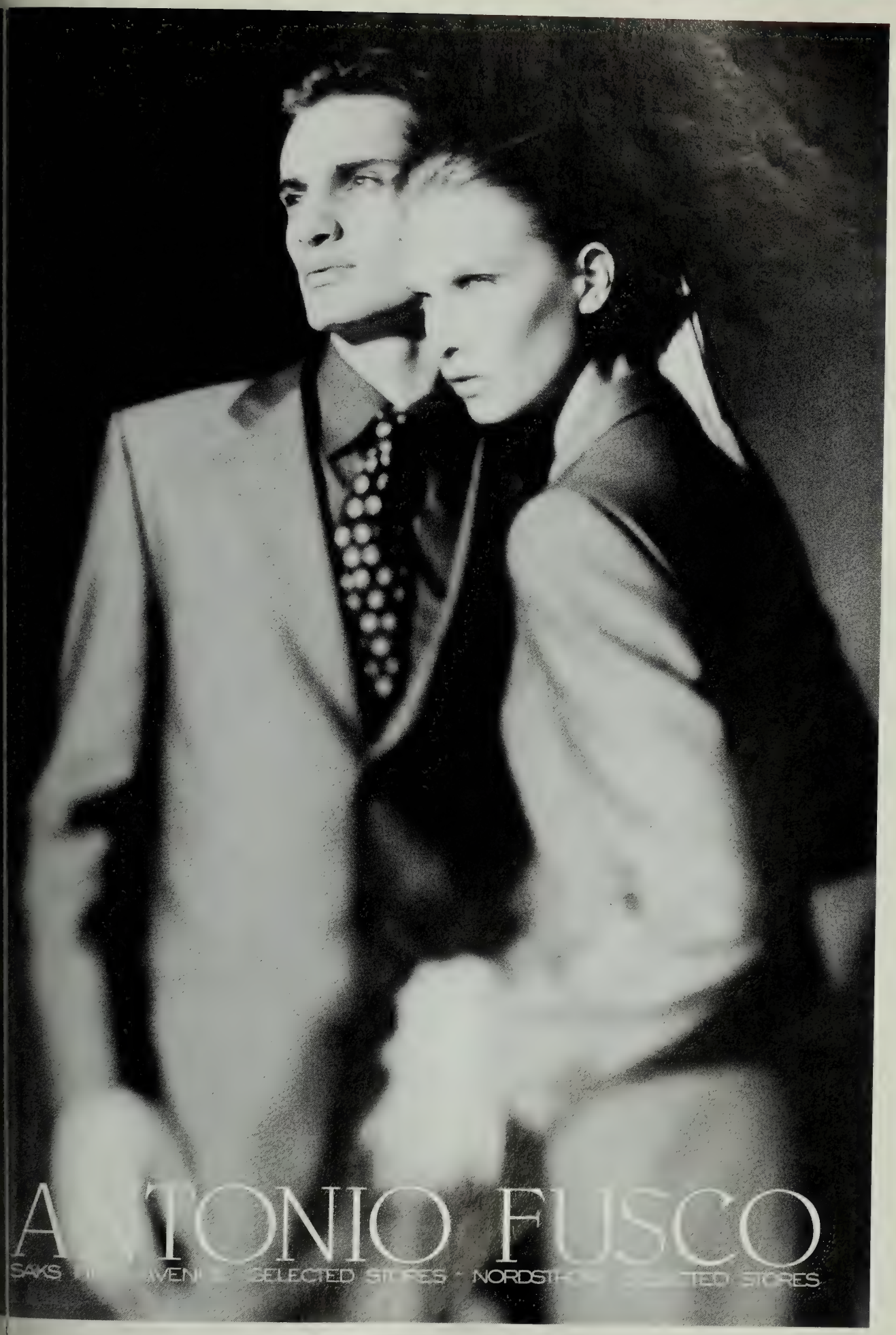
Jaws earned $129 million in rentals, a record that stood for two years, until the release of Lucas's *Star Wars*. After *Jaws* the business would never be the same. As the studios discovered the value of wide openings at hundreds of theaters and massive TV advertising, the costs of marketing and distribution rose. The importance of print reviews was diminished. It became virtually impossible for a big film to build slowly and find its audience by dint of quality alone. As costs mounted, the willingness to take risks dissipated.

Jaws whetted corporate appetites for big profits fast, which is to say, studios wanted every film to be *Jaws*. In a sense, Spielberg was the vehicle through which the studios began to reassert their power. Hollywood was thriving. With *Jaws*, 1975 looked to be another record year. The Vietnam War, which had been a permanent fixture of the American landscape for a decade, was finally over. Nixon was licking his wounds in disgrace.

And further changes were afoot. Barry Diller presided over the departures of Yablans and Evans from Paramount. Ashley and Calley left Warner. Although they eventually came back, the studio was never the same. Then, on January 20, 1975, five ambitious young agents left the largest agency, William Morris, to strike out on their own. They called their new company Creative Artists Agency.

With the rise of CAA, the packaging of movies became a fine art. According to Yablans, "During my era [in the early 70s at Paramount], you got a script, you hired a director, you hired the actors you made a movie. Now they did it backwards. The package was put together before the movie was ready to get made, so the script became the slave to the process. It was a lazy man's way of making movies."

In the wake of *Jaws*, the changing of the guard at Warner and Paramount and the birth of CAA, 1975 has to be regarded as a watershed year. But few spotted the downside. One prescient observer was Pauline Kael, who in August 1974 had written an essay for *The New Yorker* that gazed into the future. "There's no audience for new work," she charged. Railing against "the bosses" and their failure to push pictures such as *The Conversation* and *Mean Streets*, she pointed out that the studios had recovered from the seismic dislocations of the late 60s. Ironically, the very success of the New Hollywood, rather than rendering the studio system obsolete, had reinvigorated it. She wrote, "The movie executives were shaken for a few years; they didn't understand what made a film a counter culture hit. They're happy to be back on firm ground." □


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IT'S A MADELINE WORLD

Lots of favorite childhood books are being made into movies this year. *Madeline* is by no means the smallest one

"All age groups in most countries watch moving pictures, and they watch them for many more hours than ordinary people have ever spent in churches," wrote the late Bruno Bettelheim in 1981. "In many ways and for many people, it is the only experience common to parents and children."

With a new baby boom in full throttle, the great G-rated movie has become a kind of Grail. Children want it, parents want it—Bettelheim was on the ball. It doesn't hurt that the big demand for kid cinema splices nicely into the nostalgia pangs of aging baby-boomers. Look how many of the movies being made today are based on beloved boomer books: *The Borrowers* has just opened, and coming down the conveyor belt are *Stuart Little, Curious George,* and *The Cat in the Hat.* It's Eisenhower's America Revisited—an era of porch doors and X-Ray Spec

One of the most awaited book-to-movie manifestations TriStar's *Madeline.* Based on Ludwig Bemelmans' 1939 hor age to Parisian schoolgirls and due out this July, it stars Ha ty Jones as Madeline, Frances McDormand as Miss Clave and Nigel Hawthorne as Lord Covington. Director Dai Mayer hints at intrigue on the set. Understand, there are girls in the movie and only one boy, Kristian de La Osa, wh plays Pepito. It seems the girls were being really mean Kristian because he fed mice to his pet snake (yuck!). O morning, however, he found two anonymous love letters u der his door, and, two days later, a letter that read: "At fir we didn't like you, but now we've decided that you're real great." Some things never change.

—LAURA JACO



Twelve little girls in straight lines . . . Frances McDormand as Clavel, flanked by Hatty J as Madeline (seated) Nigel Hawthorne as Covington. Photographe location in Clichy, Fra December 13, 1

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comparison of '97 competitive models



The marquee of Ciro's
Sunset Strip, and Herman
the club's very sociable
Above: Anita Ekberg, Frank Si
and restaurateu
Romanoff at Ciro's in



Life Begins at 8:30

Judy Garland, Frank Sinatra, Marilyn Monroe, Cary Grant–all the biggest stars of the 1940s and 50s danced, drank, loved, and lost at Ciro's on Sunset Boulevard. In a family memoir, the niece of Ciro's owner Herman Hover passes on the secrets of that legendary playground

BY SHEILA WELLER

"Our opening for Herman at Ciro's in 1947 was one of the most exciting nights of my life," Andy Williams is telling me.

I've called the sleek, honey-voiced singer at his eponymous theater in Branson, Missouri, where these days he entertains busloads of Wal-Mart-clothed Pat Robertson followers. At my request, he's plunging himself back in time 50 years, to when he was the youngest of the singer Kay Thompson's Williams Brothers, getting his big break at my uncle Herman Hover's Sunset Strip nightclub. They were a


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revolutionary act, he says. "We hung three mikes from the ceiling. No one had done productiony things with boy singers before. After us came people who did, like Mitzi Gaynor and Ann-Margret. But before us, vocal groups just stood around microphones, and the two at the ends put their hands up."

The best part was after the show. "They all came backstage—the guys my age, just starting out: Rock Hudson (the tallest, skinniest guy I had ever met) and Tony Curtis and Robert Wagner and Peter Lawford. Then the Old Guard came backstage: Leonard Bernstein and Beatrice Lillie and Noël Coward. That's what it was like: you'd go to Ciro's and bump into Judy Garland and Spencer Tracy and Clark Gable. That whole era on the Strip, with all those nightclubs," Williams says, referring to Mocambo, Trocadero, Crescendo, and the star in the firmament, Ciro's, "it burned so bright and then it was gone." Just like my family.

My uncle Herman Hover purchased Ciro's in 1946 (he had operated it, on lease, since late 1942) and owned it until its demise in 1959. He was one of Hollywood's great showmen and hosts when the town was at its most glamorous. I recently took his unpublished memoir, *Ringside Table,* down from a high closet shelf and pored through it. Like some Nathanael West character, Uncle Herman typed his life story on a rickety Underwood, using the backs of Ralphs Markets flyers for paper, in a dark little room on Hollywood Boulevard. Ciro's was his life, his love. After Ciro's, and his arrest in what my sister, Elizabeth, and I refer to as "the incident," came his long hibernation in disgrace and then oblivion. When he died in April 1996, a destitute, 88-year-old nursing-home dweller, Elizabeth and I paid for his funeral. I wrote his obituary and sent it to the trade papers. Most people who knew who he was assumed he had died decades earlier.

I grew up in Uncle Herman's nightclub. My mother, Helen Hover Weller, a Hollywood journalist and neurosurgeon's wife, was her older brother's business partner, and as a child I would ride in her fishtail Cadillac to that huge, ungainly building pushed up against the dirt-dry hills on Sunset Strip and Kings Road. I would help Nancy, the photographer, fold the cardboard photo holders and line up the Ciro's lipsticks on the Dutch-door sill, and I would help Reggie, the cigarette girl, stack the Old Golds and Camels and (brand-new) Marlboros in the tray she carried by a velvet rope as she walked around in her thigh-high skirt and fishnet stockings. I would skid across the small dance floor and bang the snare drums. (Uncle Herman's No. 1 rule was that a dance floor must be small so that patrons could "bump posteriors" with celebrities. Another rule, in those cheerfully sexist times: No phones in the ladies' room, which would have allowed a woman seeking to abandon her escort to call for a replacement.) I'd visit Bobby, the bartender, in his cavelike lair—I was endlessly warned that the state liquor commission, which was like my Old Testament Yahweh,

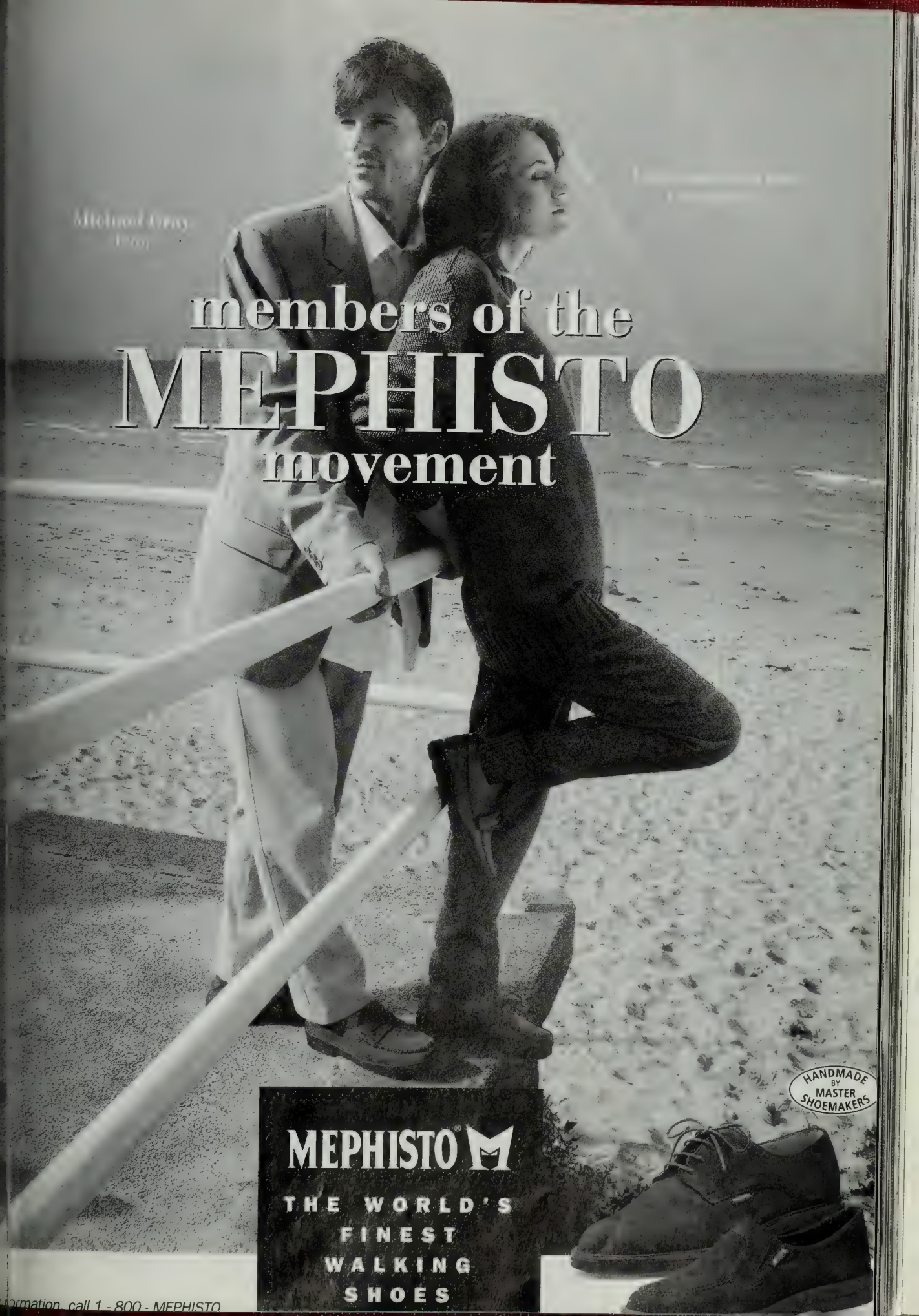
Uncle Herman's No. 1 rule was that a dance floor must be small so that patrons could "bump posteriors" with celebrities.

would swoop down with arrest warrants the instant a minor dipped a finger into a shot glass—and pester Mañuel, the headwaiter. When Kay Thompson wrote *Eloise,* she told my mother I was one of her models.

The big, two-tiered nightclub bulged with secrets (and only now does 84-year-old Johnny Oldrate, my uncle's loyal maître d' for 17 years, disgorge them): For instance, that many nights Walter Winchell and Marilyn Monroe sat huddled at a tiny table, but, because Winchell was so powerful, their dates never got into the papers. That a despondent Sammy Davis Jr. was indeed forced by Harry Cohn to marry Loray White; Cohn had dispatched a minion to "inform" him that he had to break up with Kim Novak. That a melancholy Frank Sinatra used to get drunk at Ciro's after Ava Gardner dumped him and once, in the lobby, took a few swings at a reporter who dared to n tice. That, while Howard Hughes's gues were dining and dancing inside, Hugh would keep company with women an old Chevrolet in the parking lc Such whispered items charged the a as the room got dressed for the ev ning, and the sights, smells, and soun of that process—the roped bundles linens tossed in like hay bales by tl Mexican busboys, who then knif them open and flapped them out ov the green leather banquettes; the liqu and prime-rib-*jus* scents ground de into the dank kitchen floorboards; tl long-legged girls in toreador pants wi scarves over their hair rollers confe ring with orchestra leader Dick Stabi while mike cords were whipped ar baby spots were dimmed—are tl Proustian madeleines of my childhoo

On the drive home after the fir show, as a sleepy passenger twistir in the backseat, glimpsing the bro bucket of L.A. lights from the und lating ridge of Sunset, I felt sa and lucky. There was sensuality the air; even a child could feel But it was also a fiercely conve tional time. Love, marriage, ar infidelity were serious thing irony and playfulness wou not color peoples' attitudes t ward them for another de ade. The grown-ups in my li were too unsophisticated see the tension between the super cial hedonism around them and the emotional innocence. Or to know th if you live your life in a Hollywo nightclub it is almost bound to follc the curve of the ever present melodram

Ciro's existed before Uncle Herm took it over. It was opened and nam (after a famous club in Berlin, sor believe) in 1940 by Billy Wilkerson, Nashville-bred Irish Catholic newspap man, former seminarian, and prodigio gambler who founded *The Hollywo Reporter.* The club was the second Wilkerson's three venues on weste Sunset Boulevard. (He'd opened Ca Trocadero, one of the first Sunset St nightclubs frequented by movie stars, 1934; he would open Restaurant LaR in the early 40s.) Thus, between his j riodical and his watering holes, W kerson did much to transform pre-w Hollywood from an undefined compa town wedged into the sprawling you city's otherwise unrelieved transport midwesternness (H. L. Mencken call L.A. the "double Dubuque") into a se


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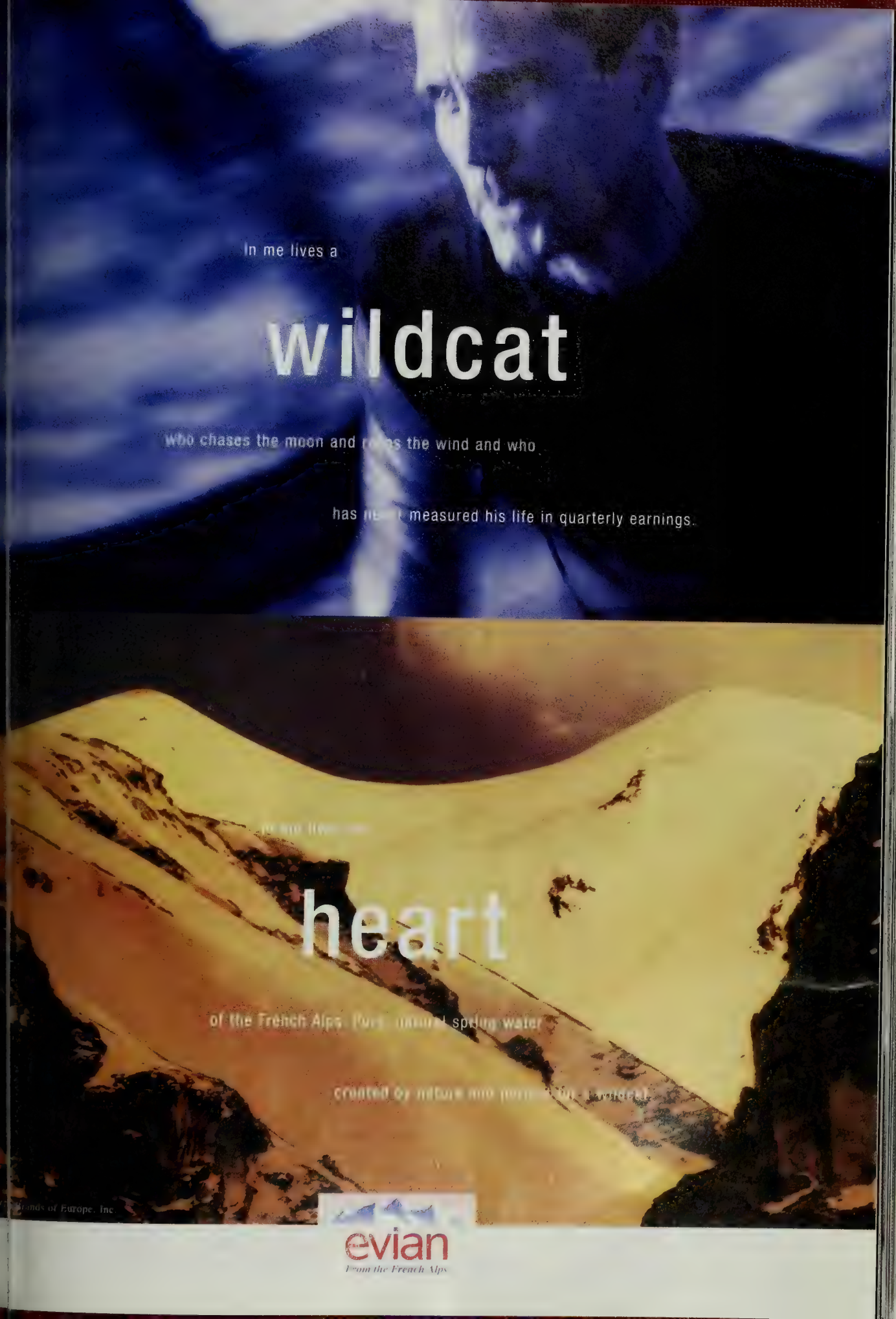


Clockwise from top: **Jack Benny entertains Gary Cooper and his wife, about 1948; Mick Rooney and his wife, Ava Gardner, 1942; Tyrone Power and his wife, Annabella, 1941 Herman Hover, with Clark Gable and his fifth wife, Kay Spreckels; Barbara Stanwyck dances with her six-time co-star, Joel McCrea, about 1941.**

sufficient community with its own ne organ and a nightlife the equal of dazzling workaday product. In his mer oir my uncle described Wilkerson as man "with a pencil-thin mustache, lon er strands of hair combed over a ba spot like General Douglas MacArthur Gaylord Ravenal right off the sho boat: charming, polished, sartorial, a tute and completely ruthless, a nonst talker whose words had the impact of jackhammer."

Wilkerson's Ciro's was *the* place the early 40s. "*Everyone* was the at Billy's club: Bogie, Bacall—all them," recalls Mary Scott Hardwicke witty Palm Springs grande dame w used to be Wilkerson's cigarette gi There seem to have been certain arch typal vocational experiences for a cig rette girl on the Strip, and Mary had of them: *1. Girl acquires job in a wac manner.* Mary was hiding in the bush in front of Ciro's looking for mo stars when the parking-lot attenda first ordered her away, then got a lo at her legs and hired her. *2. Nightcl owner's proprietariness toward cigare girl's virtue imbues her with cheeky ha to-getness.* "Billy kept all the predat away so well that when Oleg Cass kept asking me out I said, 'You want beautiful girl? Here!' I pointed to Ge Tierney. 'Try *her.*' They ended up getti married." *3. Cigarette girl's winsomen stimulates random acts of kindness notorious tough cookies.* "I said, 'C Miss Stanwyck, you look lovely tonigh The next day a huge package arrived my house, and the dress she'd had was inside it." *4. Faux Cinderella endi followed by vile comeuppance results real Cinderella ending.* Darryl Zanu after signing Mary to a contract, zipped in his office at Fox and, "terri small accoutrement" in hand, propo tioned her. She escaped, regrouped, a married Sir Cedric Hardwicke, beco ing a British Lady.

According to Mary, Wilkerson's Cir was soap-operatic: "George Raft a Betty Grable came in all the time gether, but because he was Catholic would never marry her. Dorothy


In me lives a
wildcat
who chases the moon and
has
measured his life in quarterly earnings.
heart
of the French Alps. Pure
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From the French Alps

mour was so madly in love with Greg Bautzer she would always go into the ladies' room and cry her eyes out because Greg wasn't in love with her." Bautzer, the extremely handsome attorney for Howard Hughes, was the lady-killer of the era: he dated Lamour, Lana Turner, Peggy Lee, and, as veteran Hollywood journalist and Ciro's ringsider Jim Bacon tells me, "was such a great lover that, after one performance in bed with him, Joan Crawford bought him a Cadillac." A Ciro's bandleader whom almost all the women lusted over, Mary recalls, was so obsessed with the one who didn't (his wife) that he killed himself.

By 1942, however, Ciro's was faltering. Wilkerson knew how to attract celebrities but not how to entertain them; his attempt to produce live acts failed. While across the street, Mocambo, a smaller club with jungle décor, bloomed under the aegis of the man who would become my uncle's rival, Charlie Morrison, Ciro's went dark: a "once-rich dowager in frayed furs," she seemed to Herman, "who has run through her inheritance but is still trying to keep up appearances." My uncle went to Wilkerson and asked him for the grand lady's hand. He wished to save her.

My uncle was born in New York in 1908, the second of the four children of a Jewish insurance agent and his plump, domineering wife. A sentence at the start of his memoir—"Of the family, only my younger sister, Helen, and I survived"—rings with eerie poignancy to me, for the bond my uncle and mother developed through that succession of family deaths gained undesired strength after the uniquely simultaneous destruction of both their marriages. But back then it was the first death, at 15, of their sister, Shirley, a talented pianist, in the great influenza epidemic, that was seminal. "The breath in her chest sounded like it was choking her," Herman wrote. "I buried my face in the pillow. It was the lowest moment of my lifetime." My grandfather bought my grandmother a candy store to run to force her over her grief; as a result, Herman, Helen, and their little brother, Lenny, spent their weekend days in dark theaters.

There my uncle fell in love. "No one could understand how fascinated I was by vaudeville," he wrote. "As early as I can remember, I was going to the four-a-day. Even the tune-up was exciting. With constant practice I was able to tap-dance as well as many of the professionals. I could run up against a wall with the left leg shot straight out at the wall and jump over it with my right foot. I juggled apples, oranges, rolled-up socks, knives, and forks. I tried my hand at piano, guitar, violin, drums, banjo, mandolin, and clarinet."

In 1928, at 20, on summer break from Columbia University, Herman got a job as a chorus boy in upstart showman Earl Carroll's *Vanities,* the chief competitor of Florenz Ziegfeld's *Follies*. Carroll flamboyantly overpaid ($500 a month to Ziegfeld's $65) to make sure he got the most beautiful girls and such attractions as W. C. Fields and torch singer Lillian Roth. Carroll soon made Herman stage manager. "Not in my wildest dreams," Herman wrote, "could I have foreseen that, in show business four months, I would be stage manager of Broadway's largest musical comedy and biggest hit of the season."

Many nights Walter Winchell and Marilyn Monroe sat huddled at a table, but their dates never got into the papers.

Barely out of his teens, my uncle was "put in charge of 40 girls: beautiful, tempestuous, spoiled, in the main their attitude toward me patronizing and argumentative. Backstage had a sort of *Alice in Wonderland* quality: the Red Queen taking Alice by the hand, 'Faster! Faster!'" Mounting 14 ensemble numbers a night, suspending eight naked girls on a bar at audience level, "presiding over weigh-in ceremonies (there is something poignant about a girl who is putting on weight)," disguising stretch marks with makeup, he would quickly "get to know by heart every dimple, crack and freckle on a girl's body." He dispensed pain pills to menstrual suffe ers; rang down the curtain on unbidd inebriates (such as the beauty-conte winner who "waddled to the center the platform, took the microphone a hissed, 'Miss California, *my aaass!*' socialized with fellow Broadway beg ners (including one of the *Vanitie* stooges, Dave Chasen, who would lat become to Hollywood dining what H man would become to its nightlif learned from writing for the nasty Fiel that "with a star, only two things cou one, for him to think he is having l way, and, two, for him to have i coined "Through These Portals Pass t Most Beautiful Girls in the World" counter Ziegfeld's "Glorifying t American Girl."

As he conceived and directed creasingly extravagant prod tions for "stunning creatures diaphanous lace and bejewel headdresses," the "sachems of m dom," as my uncle called the were more and more frequen in the audience, their henchm bearing huge bouquets backst for the girls who caught th bosses' eyes. Four months af he started, one of the recipients of th bouquets informed my uncle, "The b at the Slipper want to see you." T Silver Slipper was the most glamor nightclub in Prohibition America. I uncle describes his job interview: was ushered into a storeroom: sm with a low ceiling, filled with a t kitcheny odor, and so dark I ban my shin on a serving cart." Beyon clot of stacked chairs, under a pict of Mayor Jimmy Walker, "aroun massive oak table with their backs the wall were Owney Madden, Fran Marlowe and Arnold Rothstein. [Lu Luciano and Jack "Legs" Diamond, other owners, were absent.] Mr. M den, obviously the head of the cal pumped my hand with unexpected he ness and spoke affably." As Herman cepted a cigar and an offer to moonli as their choreographer, "I felt like a nered mouse confronted by a big pur cat." Now he had two jobs.

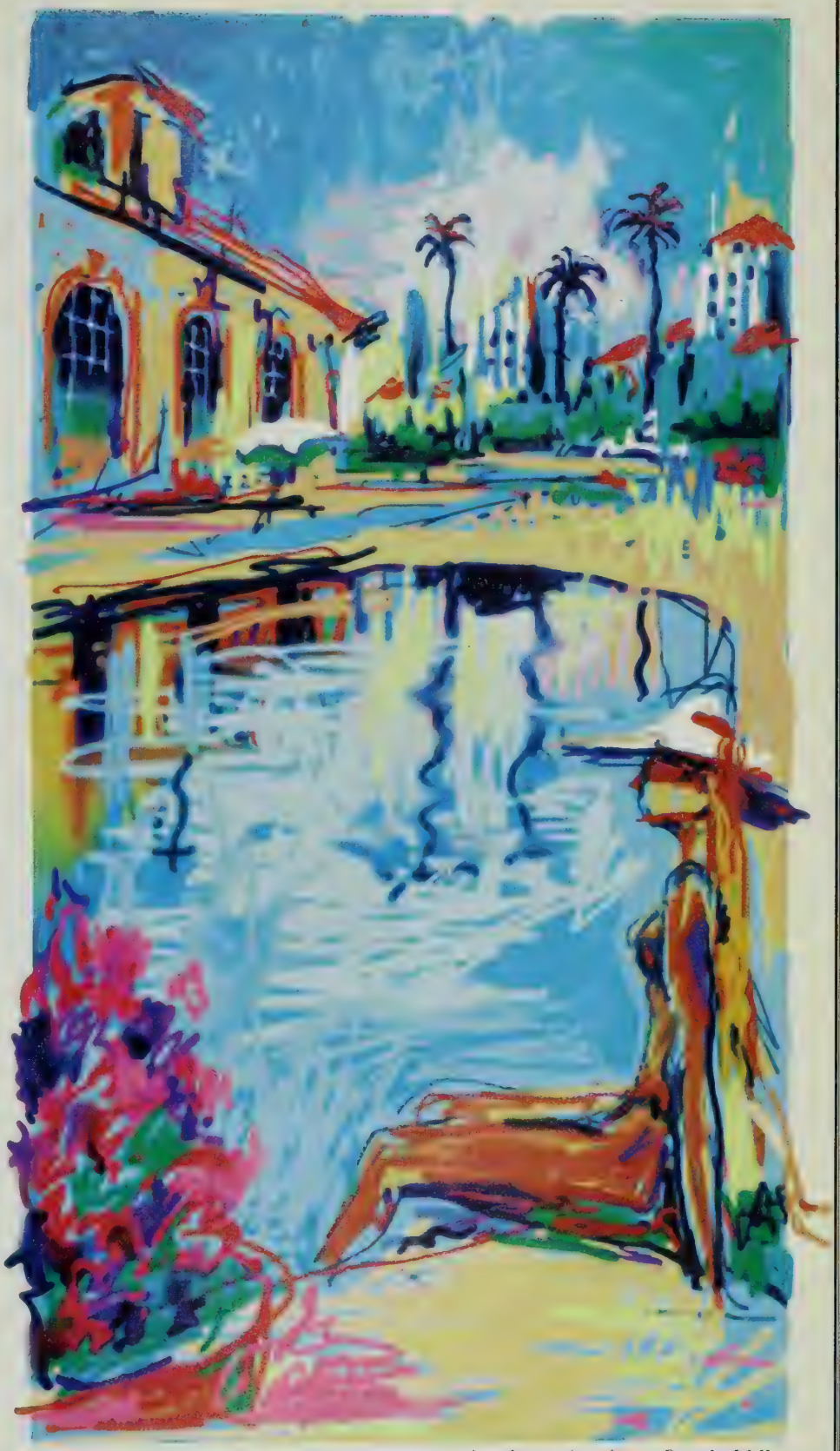
Working at the Slipper intoxicated uncle. Babe Ruth stopped in. Cha Lindbergh and Damon Runyon ed Slipper showgirls. A young spo writer named Ed Sullivan came, grew intrigued with entertainment. club's mix of society, theater, and sp people, as well CONTINUED ON PAGE

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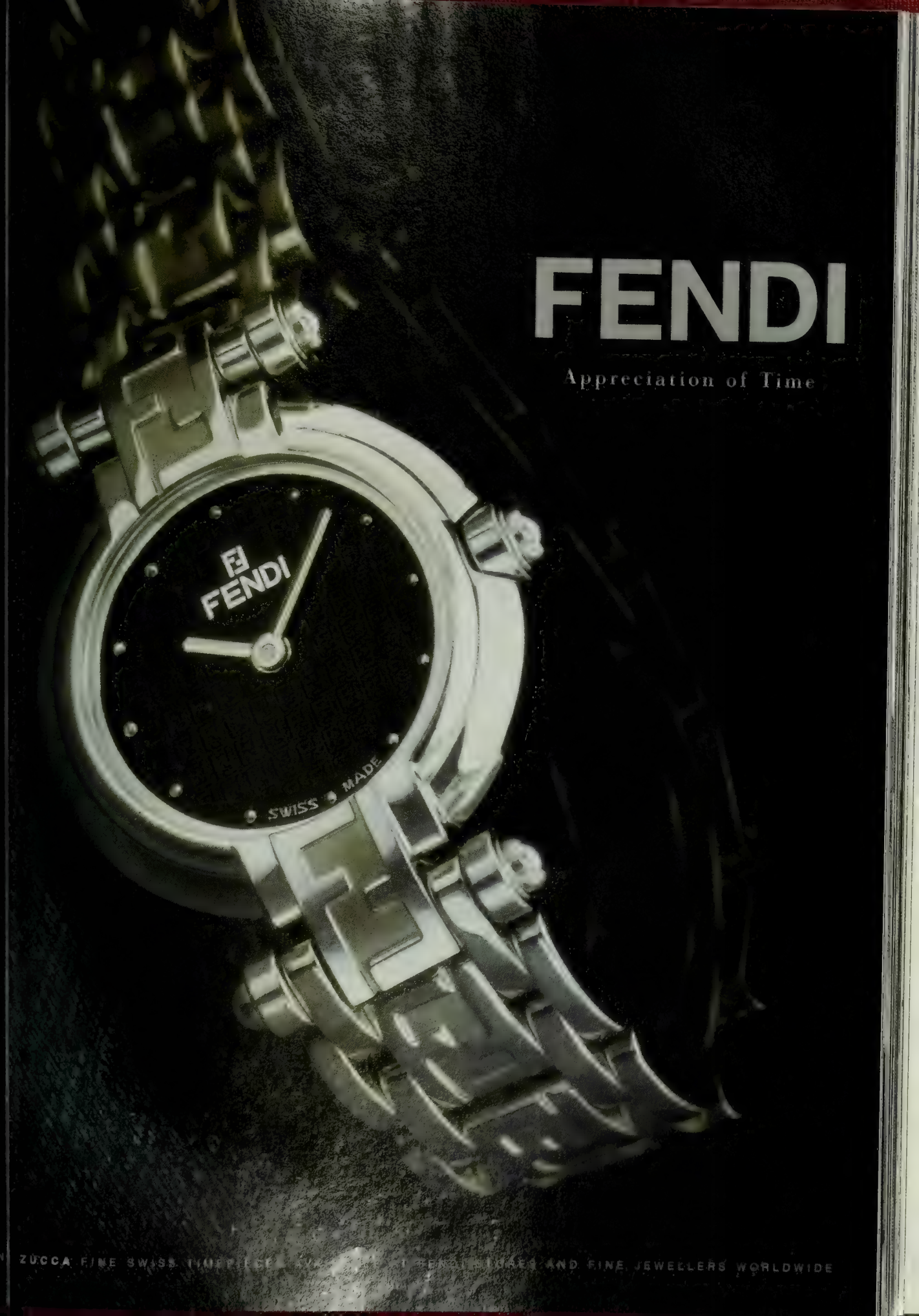
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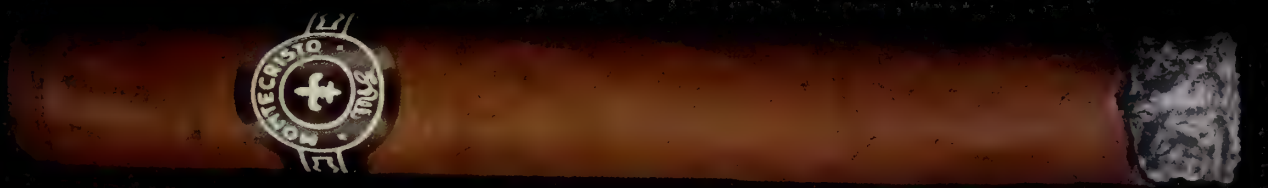


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ONTINUED FROM PAGE 266 as gamblers nd gangsters and beautiful women, gave t addictive powers.

When Herman wasn't working at the lipper or the *Vanities,* he was at Har-em's Cotton Club (also owned by the lipper bosses), where he was struck y two phenomenal orchestra leaders nd two chorus girls. (Years later he ould book three of them—Duke Elling-on, Cab Calloway, and Pearl Bailey—as iro's headliners. The fourth, Lena lorne, would be a frequenter of Ciro's, ven before she forced another Holly-ood nightclub—the Cocoanut Grove—to ntegrate by refusing to perform unless llow blacks were admitted as patrons.)

With his parents' obstinately middle-ass priorities prodding him, my uncle agged himself back to Columbia Uni-rsity Law School. But "every time I tended class or sat down to study, horus routines and show ideas tum-ed over themselves in my head." He pt up his work for Carroll, and in 36 he moved to L.A. to take over the w Earl Carroll Theatre on Sunset ar Vine. (It later became the Moulin ouge.) In 1939, as my mother often ld me, "Herman called and said, Hollywood is booming! I'm coming to t you!'" A smart, jazzy woman who ted bandleaders and newspapermen d detested all things stuffy and ordi-ry, she'd written for *Radio Guide* and s the improbably young editor of *ick* magazine, Walter Annenberg's ockoff of the popular new *Look* and *fe.* Herman flew east, and the family ed into their Packard. On the six-day p to the golden land, the prodigal n shared the driving with his brother, nny. It was a heady relocation.

erman's November 1942 leasing of Ciro's from Wilkerson, for $900 a month (over which he would eventu-y make $10,000 to $16,000 a month profits), began inauspiciously. The te bumped the liquor-serving curfew wn from two A.M. to midnight; when rman, worried over the loss of the profitable hours, rescinded his of-. Wilkerson ("the kind of human be-who asks you a question, answers it







Clockwise from top left: **Lauren Bacall and ammy Davis Jr., 1954; the outside of Ciro's, about 1950; Rita Hayworth with director rles Vidor, 1940; Lucille Ball and composer my McHugh backed by Betty Grable, Darryl Zanuck, Marilyn Monroe, and Walter Winchell, 1953; Rock Hudson with Phyllis Winger, a Beverly Hills model, 1952.**

for you, and then says you're wrong") said he wouldn't release him from the deal, because, first, the state's move was unconstitutional (it wasn't, but it was later revoked), and, second, "you're just plain *yellow!*" Nevertheless, stoked by aggressive publicity and wartime spirit, the December 26 grand opening exceeded expectations. "Joe E. Lewis' show was fantastic—we were swamped!" Herman wrote. "Mickey Rooney pinch-hit as headwaiter and was taking orders. Jimmy Durante stepped in to help out; Desi Arnaz, in army uniform, entertained Lucille Ball, Joan Crawford and Cary Grant." Still, my uncle knew that, to really make a name for the club, he had to not just book but *create* headliners. His first foray into star-making was with the talented, little-known Latin violinist and bandleader Xavier Cugat, who proved so temperamental that Herman could get him to show up only by threatening to hire a hapless Olvera Street mariachi player with the same name to perform in his stead if he didn't.

It was worth it. "Cugat was a hinge to names," my uncle wrote. "Opening night, Carmen Miranda did a number impromptu. Tony Martin got up on the floor, and Judy Garland and Van Johnson joined in the incipient pandemonium. Cafe society was out in full strength: Esther Williams and Ben Gage, Lana Turner and Steve Crane, Ava Gardner and Howard Duff; Rudy Vallee, Gene Kelly, Cary Grant; Jack Benny, George Burns, Roz Russell and Loretta Young with their respective spouses." After that, there came a succession of two-week engagements, commemorated on matchbook covers: *H. D. Hover presents . . .* Danny Kaye, Frankie Laine, Patti Page, Sophie Tucker, the Katherine Dunham Dancers, Martha Raye, Maurice Chevalier, Billy Daniels, Mae West.

My uncle discovered Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis at the Capitol Theatre, and, after hosting Dean and Jeanne Martin's marriage at his home on North Bedford Drive in 1949, he starred Martin and Lewis at Ciro's in April 1950. They brought the house down. Later, when they were making $100,000 a week, they insisted on holding their Ciro's fee at its original pittance. (As my uncle recalled Lewis's putting it, "Tell our agent you want to play us and you'll pay $7,000, and if he raises any squawk he can fuck hisself.")

George Schlatter—now a venerable TV producer and A-list eminence, who was Herman's show producer for four years—recalls what happened next. "Martin and Lewis's second engagement was going to be the biggest event in the history of the club. They rehearsed. Everything was great. Six hundred guests are there at the opening (and Ciro's openings were tuxes and long gowns and jewels and champagne: a major social event), sitting down to their dinners . . . and all of a sudden Jerry calls at about seven o'clock: he has a fever of 104! Now, you can't imagine what a disaster this was! So Herman and I drive up to Chasen's to find substitutes. We find Tony Martin having dinner at one table and Alan King having dinner at another. We figure, Tony Martin, Alan King—that's close enough! I say, 'You gotta help us!' They say, 'We're eating!' I say, 'I'll feed ya between shows!'" They got up, went to Ciro's, and, along with a hilarious appearance by Dean Martin, "put on a great show."

"Opening night, Carmen Miranda did a number impromptu. Tony Martin, Judy Garland, and Van Johnson joined in."

Schlatter laughs at the memory, then says, "You can't imagine anybody doing that today, can you? Back then, things just *worked.* There was no Mothers Against Drunk Driving—*everyone* drove drunk, and yet there seemed to be fewer accidents. Columnists sat on stories, instead of what the tabloids do now. The studio moguls had all the power (a Harry Cohn could just point to a girl and say, '*She's* a star!'). Stars were obedient; the movie industry was a very controlled environment. The I.R.S. took your word for things. (Charlie Morrison lost all his tabs one year; h said, 'I don't have any records, but I' *tell* you what I made.' They *believe* him!) And we knew what to do wit mobsters: Mickey Cohen [who was r portedly shot at outside Ciro's] used t come in all the time. We weren scared of him; we just never billed hi for his dinners." Of that old Holl wood of "panache and bravado," inn cence, authoritarianism, and commo sense, he says, "Things were neat then. There was a *code.* People unde stood each other."

Herman presented an elegant-lookin slang-spouting New York stripp named Lili St. Cyr, whose eme gence, nude, with bubbles from a gia champagne glass on the stage, "was th most startling thing for that era," recal premier Hollywood columnist Army A cherd, who was then a legman for th *Herald Express*'s reporter Harrison Ca roll. Actually, by most accounts, S Cyr's act was the second most startlin The first was the night (later memori ized in the movie *Shampoo*) that Pa lette Goddard and director Anato Litvak "practically fornicated on th dance floor," says Jim Bacon, wh received eyewitness accounts. Aft my uncle escorted them off, th repaired to their table, under whi Litvak crouched and, quite unm takably, adds Bacon, "perform cunnilingus on her." (Bacon hi self had a memorable night wh the musical star Dan Dail chose Ciro's to out himself as transvestite. Wearing "high hee lipstick, and a dress with hu flowers on it, he asked me dance. I just said, 'Dan, you're one the world's great dancers. I couldn follow you.'")

But it was Sammy Davis Jr. who su plied my uncle's club with its most st ried evening. Herman had signed t virtually unknown Will Mastin Trio a warm-up act for Janis Paige in an e gagement starting on Academy Awar night in 1951. Davis devoted a chapt of his autobiography, *Yes I Can,* to t night, describing how nervous he a his uncle and father were, especia since, "with half of Hollywood out the town, Ciro's was the logical pla for them to wind up their evenin 'What's it like down there, Massey? Sammy queried from the dressi room. "Elegant!" Mastin replied. "Y never played anything like this b fore, I can tell you that. It's got t



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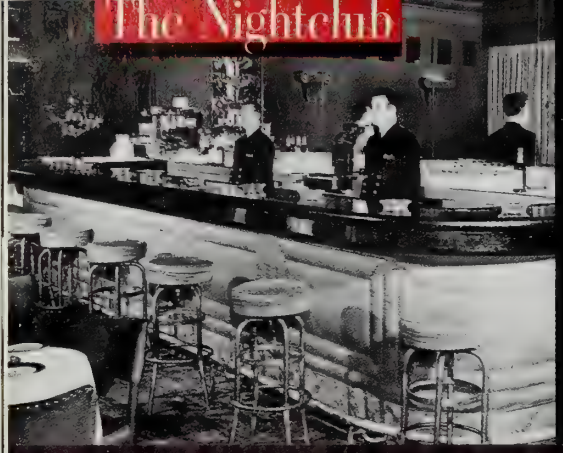
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Clockwise from top left: **the bar at Ciro's; the marquee, beginning "H. D. Hover Presents"; Will Mastin and his nephew Sammy Davis Jr. stop and chat with Frank Sinatra, Anita Ekberg, and Mike Romanoff, 1955; cover of the photo holder customers bought as a souvenir; Pearl Bailey and Marlene Dietrich; Cary Grant and his wife, Betsy Drake, 1955; Billy Wilder, Mel Ferrer and his wife, Audrey Hepburn, Maurice Chevalier, and James Stewart, 1956; Jeanne and Dean Martin, 1956.**

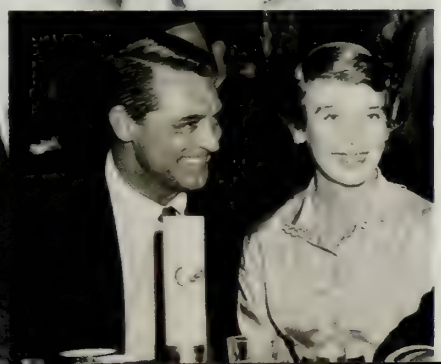
French menus and the captains in tails.'

When the trio took to the floor, "they were supposed to do a 15-minute opening for Janis," George Schlatter recalls. "But Sammy got carried away—and the whole room went crazy! They wouldn't let him off!" After the energetic tap dancing, Davis switched to imitations of Louis Armstrong, Humphrey Bogart, John Garfield. Finally, after doing seven encores and running out of impressions, Davis said, "I did Jerry Lewis. . . . The sight of a colored Jerry Lewis was the absolute *topper.*" Schlatter recalls, "Janis never











got on. She waited out the whole show in the hallway." Davis stayed up for the reviews. "I turned to Herb Stein's review in *The Hollywood Reporter* and read out loud: 'Once in a long time a artist hits town and sends the place to its ear. Such a one is young Sammy Davis Jr. of the Will Mastin Trio at Ciro's.'"

Davis's return to the stage after the car accident in which he lost his eye three and a half years later, also took place at Ciro's. Frank Sinatra introduced him, and, as Davis put it in his book: "I looked out into the audience. From one end of Ciro's to the other were the giants of the motion picture industry—the Cary Grants, the Bogarts, the Edward G. Robinsons, the Spencer Tracys, Gary Coopers, Jimmy Cagneys


TSE

Dick Powells—standing and applauding. I saw tears running down June Allyson's cheeks. People were shouting 'Bravo!' and whistling."

A typical evening at Ciro's would start at eight, when reservation holders would come in for dinner. The club held 500 in the main room, and an additional 150 in the back banquet room (from which the stage show was visible), and on an average night, George Schlatter recalls, there would be about 200 reservation holders, most of them noncelebrities. ("But for someone like Sammy the whole room was reserved.") For some of the young actors and actresses who filled the room, "the evening was a work night: a date arranged by the studio so they could be seen and photographed."

Couples danced to Bobby Ramos's Latin band, and the talent arrived at 9:30, "either through the main room, to say hello (the comics mainly did this)," or down a special walkway on the alley side of the building. People who had started their evening dining at Chasen's, Romanoff's, or LaRue were now also arriving for the 10 P.M. show, and there were always special ringside tables held for celebrity walk-ins. ("Trust me," Schlatter says, "if Frank or Lana or Monroe or Jack Lemmon or Zanuck walked in, we'd find a table for them.")

Dick Stabile's orchestra played between shows, and by midnight, when the second show began, the room had filled with people who had started out the evening at the much smaller Crescendo and Mocambo, which didn't have dance orchestras, or who had come from the Cocoanut Grove, where Freddy Martin was the orchestra leader, Fred Hayman (later the owner of Rodeo Drive's landmark boutique Giorgio) was the maître d', and Merv Griffin was the piano player. By two A.M. every glass had to be off the table. Favored patrons were sometimes treated to breakfast in the back room; others went off to the all-night King's Restaurant on Crescent Heights and Santa Monica, where disc jockey Larry Finley played records. But the most soulful ending of a Ciro's evening, Schlatter recalls, was during Nat "King" Cole's two or three engagements a year, "when, after all the customers were gone, we would get out a couple of bottles of champagne and put on the work lights and Nat would sit down at the piano and, in the darkened room, play the soft jazz he could never play during the regular show, because people were talking."

With radio shows broadcast from Ciro's lobby and a TV show in the upstairs Ciroette room, "Herman was now as well known as Ciro's," says A. C. Lyles, Paramount producer emeritus, who has been with the studio 69 years. As a handsome young man-about-town, Lyles used to go to Ciro's with a different date every night—Ginger Rogers, Joan Crawford,

Then there was the night when Paulette Goddard and director Anatole Litvak "practically fornicated on the dance floor."

Jane Withers, Rhonda Fleming, Lizabeth Scott, Martha Vickers, the last of whom he married. But then, Ciro's, Peggy Lee noted in her autobiography, *Miss Peggy Lee*, was "inhabited by the most eligible bachelors." As for Lee herself, "she functioned on an entirely different level than the rest of us," Schlatter says affectionately. "She went into a zone when she performed. Once she was late for her show because she'd stopped to look at a fire. Another time, she took a break and blew me a kiss, and then went back out and started the whole show all over again: 'Lover,' 'Mañana.' She got confused and sang them all twice. The audience *loved* it!"

My mother loved it, too. She *loved* this life. By now she was married to my father, Daniel Weller, a surgeon, and she had had us, her two daughters. Even though the marriage had begun to go sour and my father had become cold and cruel, all that was masked by the glittery milieu. They were always at Ciro's, and they ran with a high-bourgeois crowd that included writers Irving and Sylvia Wallace, Abe Lipsy (the furrier immortalized in Joan Didion's *Play It as It Lays*) and his wife, Muriel, and composer Lionel Newman. Besides, my mother loved my father. In truth, most people did; he was naturally charismatic, and he knew it.

She had met him on a blind date that neither had wanted to go on, and she was taken by him immediately. He had a damaged heart, the result of rheumatic fever, and it had barred him from the military service he craved (he eventually compensated by becoming a hunter, sailor, and Dixieland trumpeter), and left him with a compelling melancholy, a steely anger, and an irresistible sense of humor. (He'd spent much of his childhood bedridden, imitating the voices of radio comedy characters. "He would lie in bed and stare at the ceiling, keeping me up laughing all night with a running dialogue of those 20-year-old shows," his medical-school roommate once told me.) In proposing marriage, my father had cautioned my mother that he had "one foot on a banana peel, the other on the grave." She said she'd take her chances.

My father hated L.A. and harbored a diffident envy of his famous brother-in-law, whose superficial work he disdained but whose financial generosity he profited from—and whom his wife cleaved to so, especially after spinal meningitis took the life of her brother Lenny. The best year of my parents' marriage was spent, a few years before I was born, in a tiny apartment in Boston, where he was a neurosurgery resident at the Lahey Clinic and she worked on the rewrite desk of the *Boston American*. (Five years ago, when my mother knew she was going to die she stuck a Post-it note on her framed *American* staffer's portrait, instructing my sister and me, in a quivering hand, "Save this. Those were happy days." They should have stayed there.

But they moved to Hollywood, and lived first at, then near, Uncle Herman's North Bedford Drive home where his elegant Sunday pool parties had become a coveted invitation. ("Everyone is welcome at Ciro's, H. D. Hover's glittering night club," the blurb of a November 1948 *Modern Screen* article "By Invitation Only," read, "but to a


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tend one of those celebrated revels at his bachelor home, you've got to be somebody special!") Nick Sevano, Sinatra's former manager, remembers playfully pushing Marilyn Monroe into Herman's pool while the cameras clicked. Herman's most star-packed soirée was the reception he gave for his cigarette girl Marjorie Steele on the occasion of her marriage to A&P heir Huntington Hartford. (My uncle's next cigarette girl, Reggie Drew, bypassed *her* fauxCinderella opportunity by rejecting a jewels-for-sex proposition from the Shah of Iran and his brother.)

In the early 50s, Uncle Herman finally became a family man. The connoisseur of beautiful women married Yvonne Ealy, and in short order they had a daughter, Ellen, and a son Loring. Even in the world of glamour in which they moved, Aunt Yvonne was exceptional; with flawless features and a black French twist against porcelain skin, she exuded an imperious serenity. She was everything that I—a pudgy, anxious child—could never hope to be or even please, and on the many occasions when our families socialized, her sheer existence felt like a rebuke to me.

My uncle's long competition with Mocambo owner Charlie Morrison ("Charlie was more amorous; he would put his arm around you and hug you," says Nick Sevano; "Herman was tougher, more demanding") reached a high point in 1952 over Johnnie Ray, who was what Sinatra had once been and what Elvis would later become. Although Charlie's daughter Marilyn accomplished the feat of getting engaged to Ray at the peak of Ray hysteria (though not with her father's blessing: "Was Johnnie Ray *gay?*" Jim Bacon thunders. "Did Picasso *paint*? I was there when Charlie tried to talk Marilyn out of it"), Herman delivered the crowning blow. He booked Ray at Ciro's the weekend of the wedding. Morrison had to sit at Ciro's and watch his homosexual son-in-law fill his rival's coffers. "Charlie," George Schlatter CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Clockwise from top right: **Nancy and Ronald Reagan, about 1956; Judy Garland and Humphrey Bogart, 1955; Nat "King" Cole in performance, about 1955; Patricia and Peter Lawford, about 1958; Herman Hover with a Ciro's cigarette girl; a pool party at Hover home; Walter Winchell and Marilyn Monroe on one of their nights out at Ciro's, 1953.**


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ONTINUED FROM PAGE 282 recalls, "was ot happy."

The Morrison-Ray wedding party, at Marion Davies's Coldwater Canyon ouse, was, Bacon recalls, historic. Marion was, as usual, roaring drunk. ex Barker came with Arlene Dahl. ana Turner came with Fernando amas. (I'll never forget Fernando say- ng to Marion, 'Dahling, you look ahvellous!' That's where Billy Crystal ot it.) Champagne flowed, and by the nd of the evening they switched: Fer- ando went home with Arlene and ventually married her; Lex went home ith Lana and eventually married her." hat's what people did then: switched nd got married.

By 1957, Andy Williams says, "there was definitely a feeling of death on the Strip." Charlie Morrison had ed, but more than that, Las Vegas had t a salary standard for name lent that the nightclubs could ot come near matching. "Rock ' roll was coming in big," Wil- ms says. "It was the end of the a of small, intimate clubs. Things d changed to people performing large palaces or in very small oms or doing dinner theater." At is time, too, Herman was being ecked up on by the I.R.S., which had arpened its procedures since Charlie orrison's oral audit.

As for the end of my parents' mar- ge, my sister and I were not told of -adults did not think they owed chil- en honesty in that murky, secretive, ame-infested era. My father simply oved out (we were told that, being a ain surgeon, he "had to sleep near e hospital"), and my mother started king copious amounts of Miltown, e Valium of the day.

In December 1957, Herman closed ro's after the I.R.S. summoned him massive unpaid taxes.

Less than a month later, on the night January 8, 1958, as my father was lling his car up to our house after ving taken my sister and me to a taurant dinner, Uncle Herman's ck Cadillac sidled up next to his. As n as Elizabeth and I were out of the , Herman—as the six-column front- ge account in the *Los Angeles Times* d it—"pulled open the door of the ctor's car and 'jumped him' while he s seated behind the wheel." Then, as father described it to the police, rman "started beating me about the e and choking me. I reached for my gun in the glove compartment and ordered him to the ground." Suddenly our father slumped to the gutter, vomiting blood. My sister saw this and cried out for Uncle Herman to stop. Then she and I ran into the house to call for help. Under the headline CIRO'S OWNER ARRESTED WRESTLING WITH HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW ON LAWN, the newspaper recounted:

> The two girls . . . summoned police.
>
> When Officer W. F. Franklin arrived he saw the pair wrestling on the ground. The doctor's face, he said, was covered with blood and Hover was choking him. Hover was taken into custody and Dr. Weller, who suffered a heart attack was . . . transfered to Cedars of Lebanon Hospital.
>
> [Beverly Hills Police] Chief Anderson said Hover told the officer Dr. Weller "had caused Helen too much trouble and it's time I did something about it."
>
> Later, the night club owner was released on $250 bail supplied by Capt. Horace Brown, husband of Marion Davies.
>
> He refused to discuss the incident when he appeared in Beverly Hills Municipal Court yesterday, explaining only it would "make things worse by talking about it."

In November 1959, Ciro's, one of the last old clubs on the Strip, was sold at public auction to satisfy Herman Hover's I.R.S. debt.

My sister and I visited our father in the hospital. He was as pale as the sheets, and angry. Thinking back on what I heard when he tried to talk, I borrow Uncle Herman's words about his stricken sister, Shirley: *The breath in his chest sounded like it was choking him.* Certain that I was about to lose my father, I cried hot, helpless tears and—mouthing the words so that he would see them under his oxygen tent—told him how much I loved him.

After I left the room I learned what the attack by Uncle Herman had been about. My father and Aunt Yvonne were having a love affair. They wanted divorces so that they could marry each other.

As soon as both divorces went through, my father and Yvonne married. My two cousins became my stepsiblings. In high-romantic fashion, my father, although considerably incapacitated (he could not climb stairs or drive a car after that night), went off to sea with Yvonne for a year in an attempt to fulfill his dream of being a ship's doctor. And I, having learned a thing or two about melodrama from all those days at Ciro's, wrote Yvonne a letter threatening to do her bodily harm for taking my father away from me. I was 12 years old when I wrote that letter, yet because of it my father stopped speaking to me for virtually the rest of his life.

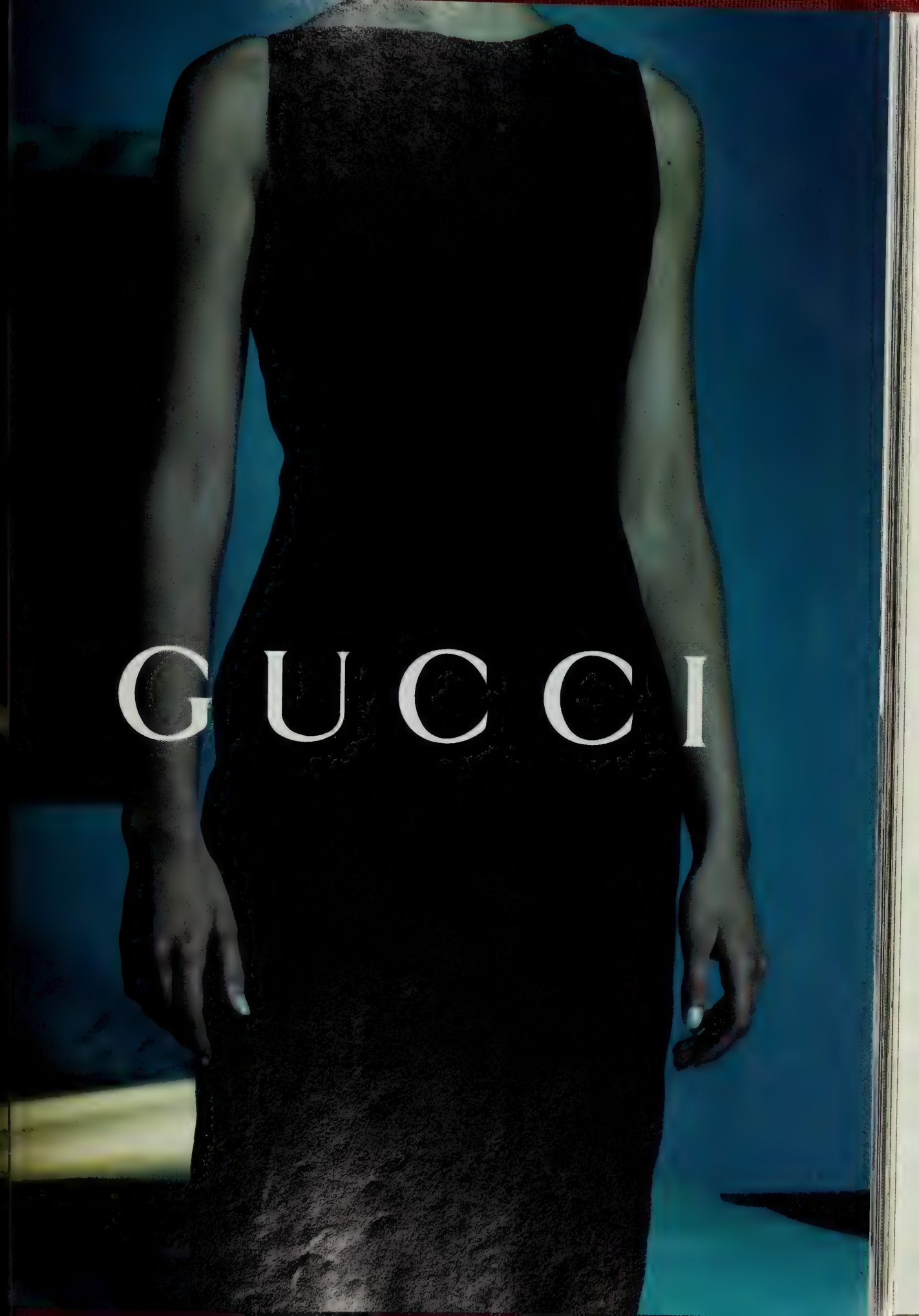
Right after the incident, my mother attempted suicide in a motel room. She was saved by a friend who, frantically jiggling the phone, summoned an operator who traced the call and sent an ambulance to rescue her as she lay unconscious. Scrambling for money, my mother then turned our Beverly Hills home into a boardinghouse for a succession of latter-day *Day of the Locust* characters. Shock treatments saved her; she revived her career and became the West Coast editor of four Dell magazines, including *Modern Screen* and *Screen Stories.*

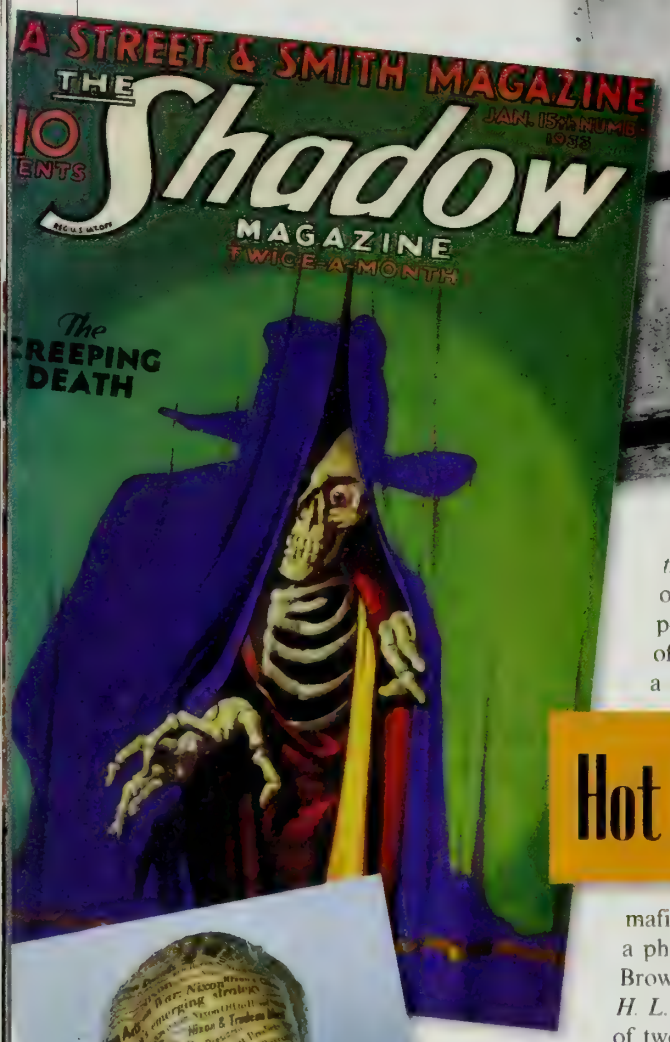
My father and Yvonne had a baby daughter. He died in 1962, at 52. She married a third time shortly afterward and, like a character in a soap opera, raised my half-sister under the fiction that this new husband was the girl's real father. The name Daniel Weller was never spoken.

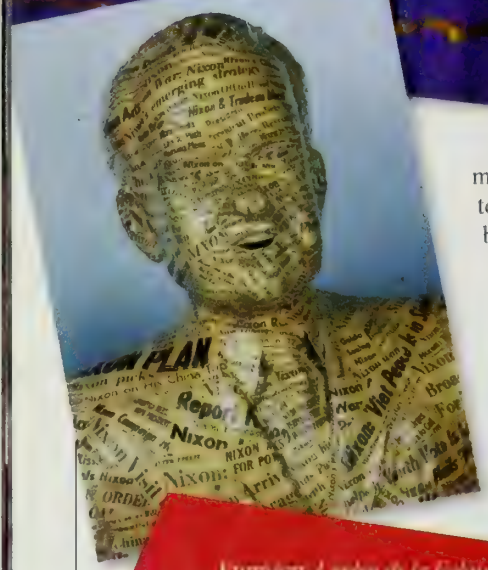
In March 1959, *The Hollywood Reporter* had run a small news item announcing that Herman Hover was bankrupt. In November of that year, it ran another item, saying that Ciro's, one of the last old clubs on the Strip, had been sold at public auction, for $352,000, with the proceeds going to satisfy Herman Hover's I.R.S. debt, which had been negotiated down from its original figure. The building has now been the Comedy Store for 26 years.

The passing of Ciro's was, Billy Wilkerson's old paper took the occasion to say, "the end of an era." □


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GUCCI







From Sept. Londres 66 to Galaxy, starring Yves Saint Laurent, originally published in Italian Vogue, March 1965. George Rozen's cover of the January 18, 1971 issue of The Stadium Magazine, an extremely popular pulp-fiction satire, a paper-mâché rendering of Richard Nixon by Stanley Glashouse for Time's Man of the Year, January 1972.

Hot Type

Surrealist filmmaker Luis Buñuel was a party to Chaplin's orgies, Cocteau's opium smoking, and Dalí's madness. The discreet charm of the man responsible for *Un Chien Andalou* and *Belle de Jour* is exposed in **JOHN BAXTER'S** superb biography, *Buñuel* (Carroll & Graf). Also this month **CHARLES FLEMING'S** *High Concept: Don Simpson and the Hollywood Culture of Excess* (Doubleday) paints a gruesome picture of the free fall of the hard-living producer who was enabled by bigwig power brokers until he died a most unflattering death. Seventy-five years of *Time* magazine's cover art are on display in *Faces of "Time"* (Bulfinch), a hallowed portrait gallery of history featuring works by Wyeth, Warhol and Lichtenstein. Feel the burn in hipster actor **PETER FONDA'S** cinematic and far-out autobiography, *Don't Tell Dad* (Hyperion), which recalls a lifetime of Fonda-family high jinks—sex, drugs, suicide, and aerobics. **JOE QUIRKS'S** *The Ultimate Rush* (Rob Weisbach Books) is a joyride in which a Rollerblading speed-ninja messenger is plunged into the world of San Francisco's Chinese mafiosi. R.E.M. front man **MICHAEL STIPE** pays homage to Patti Smith with a photo essay of the rock goddess's '96 tour, in *Two Times Intro* (Little Brown). **THOMAS QUINN CURTISS'S** *The Smart Set: George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken* (Applause) toasts the exceptional minds and magnificent wit of two of the century's most gifted critics and editors. So much for Mother's Little Helper: **STEPHEN FRIED'S** *Bitter Pills* (Bantam) takes aim at the monolithic pharmaceutical industry and the hazards of legal pill popping—adverse reaction to prescription and over-the-counter drugs kill more people than all illegal drug use combined. In the compelling *You Are Not I: A Portrait of Paul Bowles* (University of California), Bowles-family biographer **MILLICENT DILLON** charts the shifting psychic sands of the enigmatic writer-composer. In honor of National Poetry Month, pick up **DONALD HALL'S** *Without* (Houghton Mifflin), an extraordinary collection honoring the life, and lamenting the death, of his wife and fellow poet, Jane Kenyon. **ISABEL ALLENDE'S** *Aphrodite* (HarperCollins) serves up an erotic banquet of aphrodisiac recipes and steamy stories. The eerily comic tales of feminist fiction writer **KIT REED** have been swept together in *Weird Women, Wired Women* (Wesleyan/University Press of New England). **LOUISE ERDRICH'S** remarkable new novel, *The Antelope Wife* (HarperCollins), harks back to her fictional and cultural roots with a magical story set in her hometown of Minneapolis. *Pushcart's Complete Rotten Reviews and Rejections* (Norton), edited by **BILL HENDERSON** and **ANDRÉ BERNARD,** is a giddy offering of scathing and ridiculous reviews of illustrious authors. *Pulp Culture* (Assouline), by **FRANK ROBINSON** and **LAWRENCE DAVIDSON,** is a sinful collection of the pulp-fiction mags that thrived earlier this century. Four decades of elegant creation are celebrated in *Yves Saint Laurent* (DAP), edited by **BEATRICE DUPIRE** and **HADE**. And *If Only You Knew How Much I Smell You* (Bulfinch) combines canine portraitist **VALERIE SHAFF'S** photos with dog-channeling by **ROY BLOUNT JR.** to divine the Tao of pooch. *Un Chien Andalou Deux*?

ELISSA SCHAPPELL

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Iago in Brooklyn: Simon Russell Beale stars in the Royal National Theatre's production of *Othello*, which comes to the Brooklyn Academy of Music this month.

Beale du Jour

Simon Russell Beale may be a remarkably nice guy, but evil—in all its shades, varieties, and disguises—is his dramatic specialty. When this brilliant 37-year-old British actor opened as the scheming Iago in Shakespeare's *Othello* at the Royal National Theatre in London (the production comes to the Brooklyn Academy of Music this month), one critic described him as "a terrifyingly articulate, obscenely cunning slug, and the only surprise is that he doesn't leave a trail of slime across the tiled stage as he glides across it."

There's nothing predictable about Simon Russell Beale, onstage or off. He has a first-class degree in English literature from Cambridge University and training as an operatic tenor. When he's not acting, you're likely to find him absorbed in needlework or a scholarly work on Byzantine history. Russell Beale's magnificent performances—notably as Richard III (in the Royal Shakespeare Company's 1992 production), Widmerpool (in last fall's BBC television adaptation of *A Dance to the Music of Time*), and Mosca in *Volpone* (for which he won an Olivier Award in 1997)—have inspired critics to hail him as the finest actor of his generation. Yet the prospect of making it in the movies doesn't seem to interest him much. "I can't think of anything better than a good play. I'm not possessed by this great lust for film," he says. "I'm a classical actor." —RUPERT CHRISTIANSEN

Night-Table Reading

Janet Maslin,
chief film critic, The New York Times:
Elia Kazan: A Life, *by Elia Kazan (Da Capo). "I don't know a more soul-searching, truthful book about the world of acting."*





Kyle Cooper,
film-title designer:
Henry V,
by William Shakespeare (Oxford). "'And let us, ciphers to this great account, on your imaginary forces work.'"

Russ Leatherman,
president, co-founder, and voice of MovieFone:
The Rainbow Fish,
by Marcus Pfister (North-South Books). "It means my kids must be nearby, and tells of the importance of family and friends."



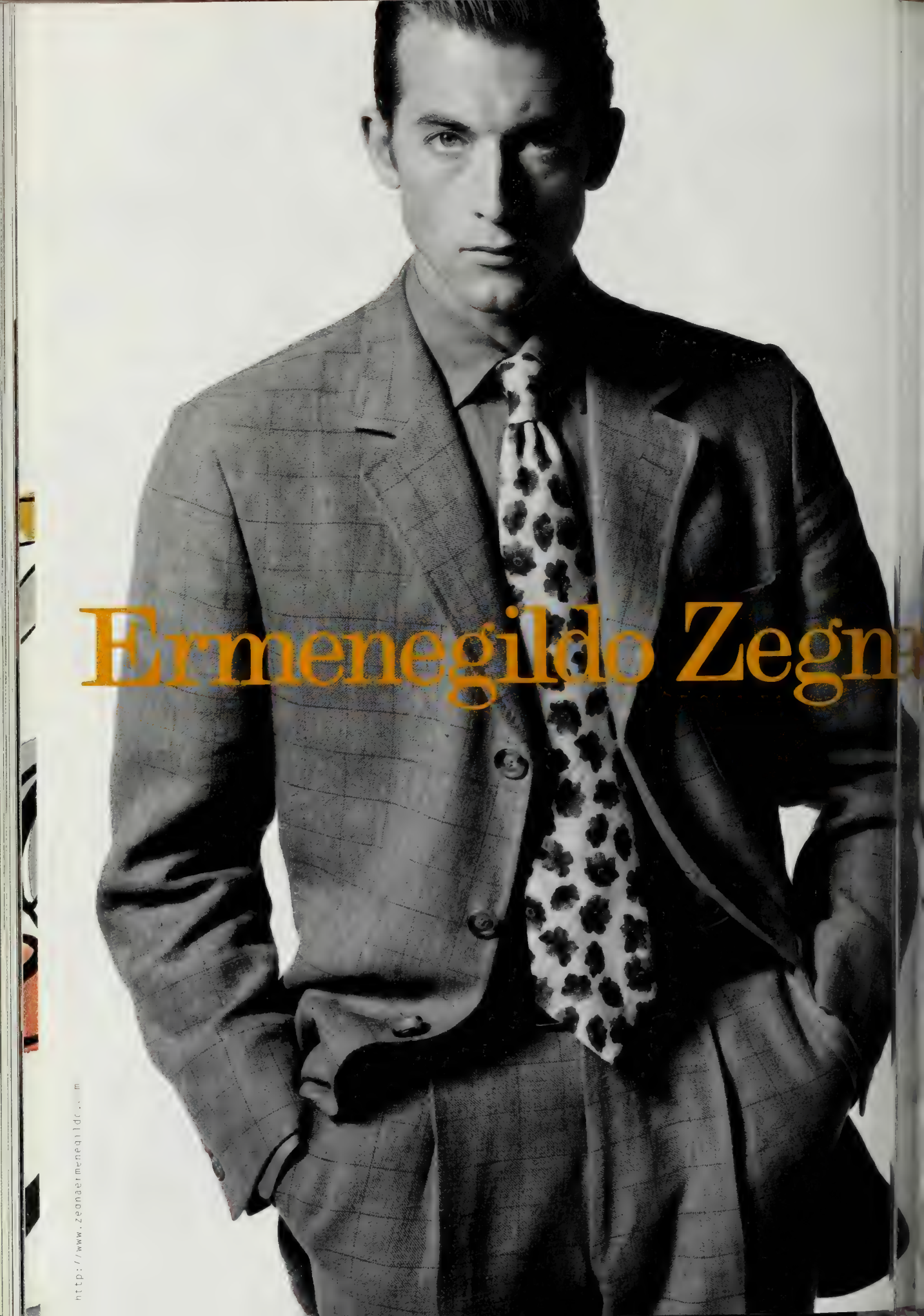


Don LaFontaine,
film-trailer voice-over performer:
Timeshare,
by Joshua Dann (Ace Boo "A 21st-century time-trave detective in 1940s Hollywood—Bogie, the D. and other screen legend help root out Nazi infiltrat A quick, witty take on a proven genre."


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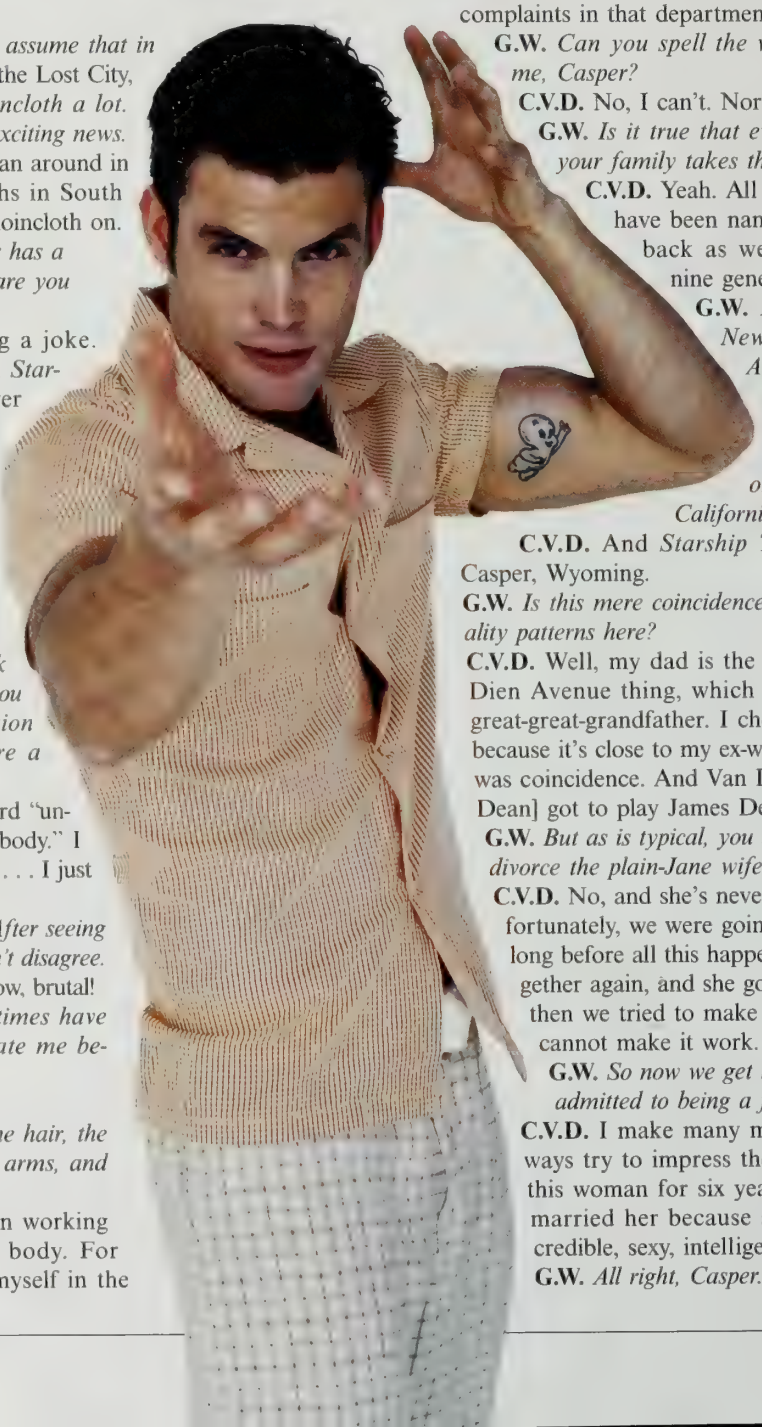
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Casper Confidential

Casper Van Dien casts his spell on Hollywood

As Johnny Rico in the surprise hit *Starship Troopers,* Casper Van Dien battled his way past alien insects and into the Hollywood limelight. This month, as Van Dien prepares to take to the trees in the upcoming *Tarzan and the Lost City,* GEORGE WAYNE catches up with the brash heartthrob and attempts to discover the man behind the loincloth.



George Wayne: *I naturally assume that in your next film,* Tarzan and the Lost City, *we get to see you in a loincloth a lot. And that, to G.W., is very exciting news.*

Casper Van Dien: Yeah, I ran around in the jungle for four months in South Africa with nothing but a loincloth on.

G.W. *Can I assume Casper has a rather huge basket? What are you trying to tell me?*

C.V.D. I was just making a joke. But you saw me naked in *Starship Troopers.* In the shower scene.

G.W. *What I loved the most in* Starship Troopers *was the torture scene. What was that like?*

C.V.D. Being whipped by a big black man? It's an experience.

G.W. *It certainly was a risk for Paul Verhoeven to cast you in this big Hollywood action movie—after all, you were a nobody.*

C.V.D. I like to use the word "unknown" as opposed to "nobody." I like to be politically correct . . . I just slept with him.

G.W. *O.K., I believe that. After seeing your acting ability, I wouldn't disagree.*

C.V.D. Oh, thanks a lot. Wow, brutal!

G.W. *Casper, how many times have you had to say, "Don't hate me because I'm beautiful"?*

C.V.D. Never.

G.W. *You have the eyes, the hair, the square jaw, amazing pecs, arms, and legs. I hate you!*

C.V.D. [*Laughs.*] I've been working out really hard for that body. For *Starship Troopers,* I got myself in the best shape I'd ever been in. When I first came out here, was always thinking, There are jocks in the gym, and the there are serious actors, and I was a serious actor. But the when I started working out, I retained more when I rea

G.W. *Well, you have the gorgeous everything and I hate yo And I pray that you have a stub for a willy!*

C.V.D. [*Laughs. Long pause.*] Oh, man! I haven't had ar complaints in that department.

G.W. *Can you spell the word "sommelier" f me, Casper?*

C.V.D. No, I can't. Nor would I even try.

G.W. *Is it true that every firstborn male your family takes the name Casper?*

C.V.D. Yeah. All the men in my fami have been named Casper, for as f back as we've recorded, abo nine generations.

G.W. *And you grew up New Jersey on Van Di Avenue?*

C.V.D. Yes, I did.

G.W. *And since doi* Tarzan *you've go on to live in Tarzan California.*

C.V.D. And *Starship Troopers* was shot Casper, Wyoming.

G.W. *Is this mere coincidence, or do we see perso ality patterns here?*

C.V.D. Well, my dad is the one who did the V Dien Avenue thing, which was named after o great-great-grandfather. I chose to live in Tarza because it's close to my ex-wife. Casper, Wyomi was coincidence. And Van Dien [pronounced V Dean] got to play James Dean in a movie.

G.W. *But as is typical, you become a star and y divorce the plain-Jane wife.*

C.V.D. No, and she's never been plain-Jane. U fortunately, we were going through our divor long before all this happened. Then we slept gether again, and she got pregnant again. A then we tried to make it work again. But cannot make it work.

G.W. *So now we get the facts. But you ha admitted to being a fool for love.*

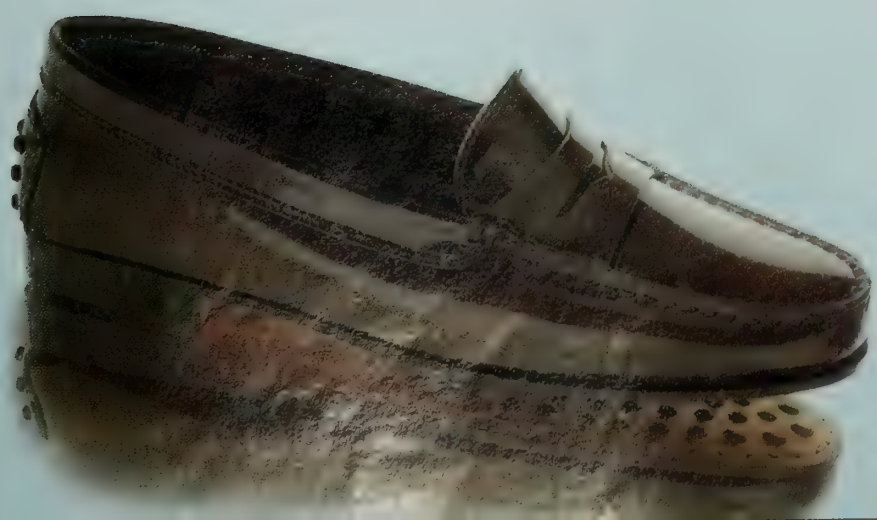
C.V.D. I make many mistakes for love. I ways try to impress the woman. I've kno this woman for six years, and we've tried married her because she is a beautiful, credible, sexy, intelligent woman.

G.W. *All right, Casper. Thanks. You can g*



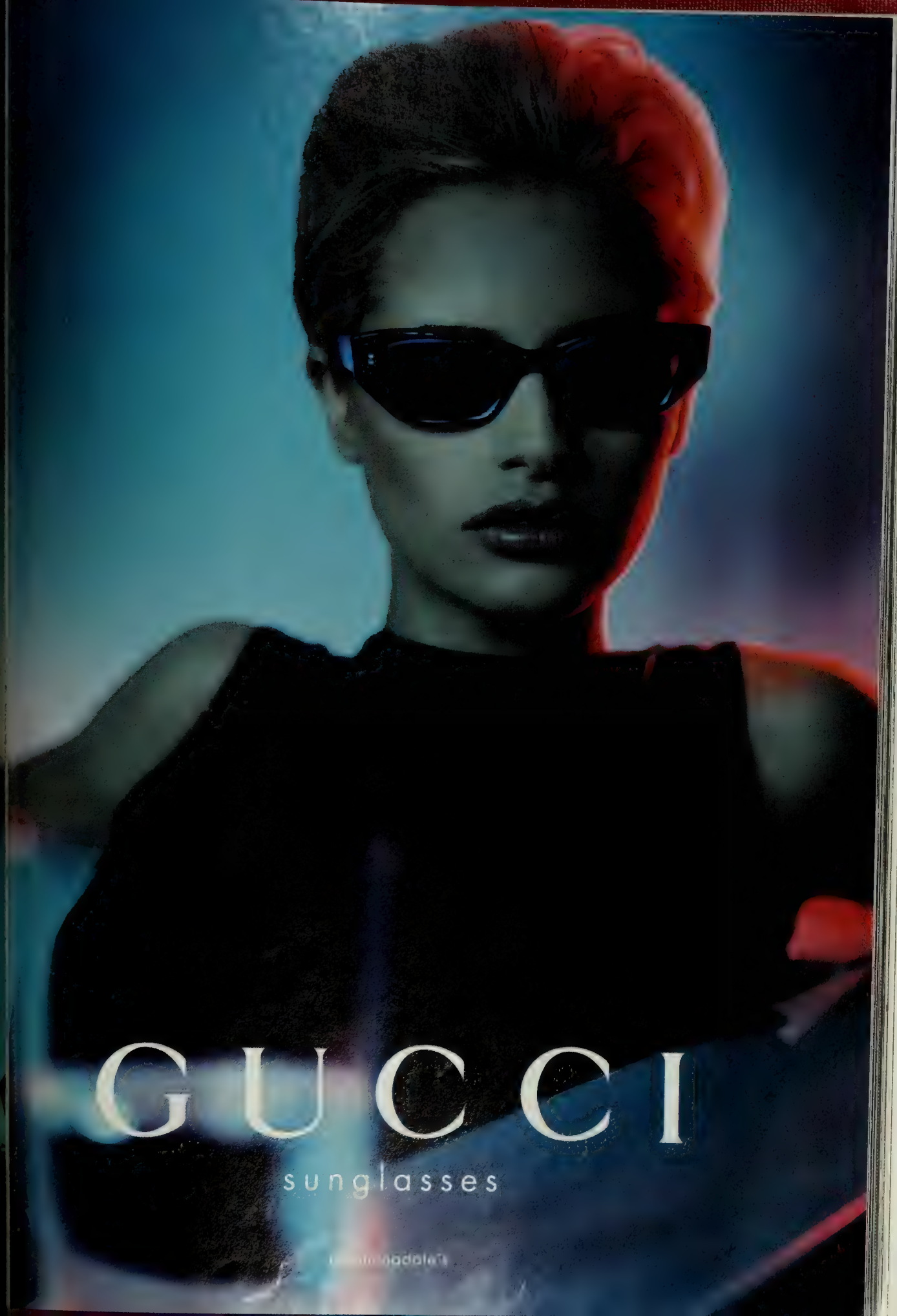
J.P. TOD'S

MADE IN ITALY



—MATT TYRNAUER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROLLIN McGRAIL


GUCCI
sunglasses

Vanities

Intelligence Report

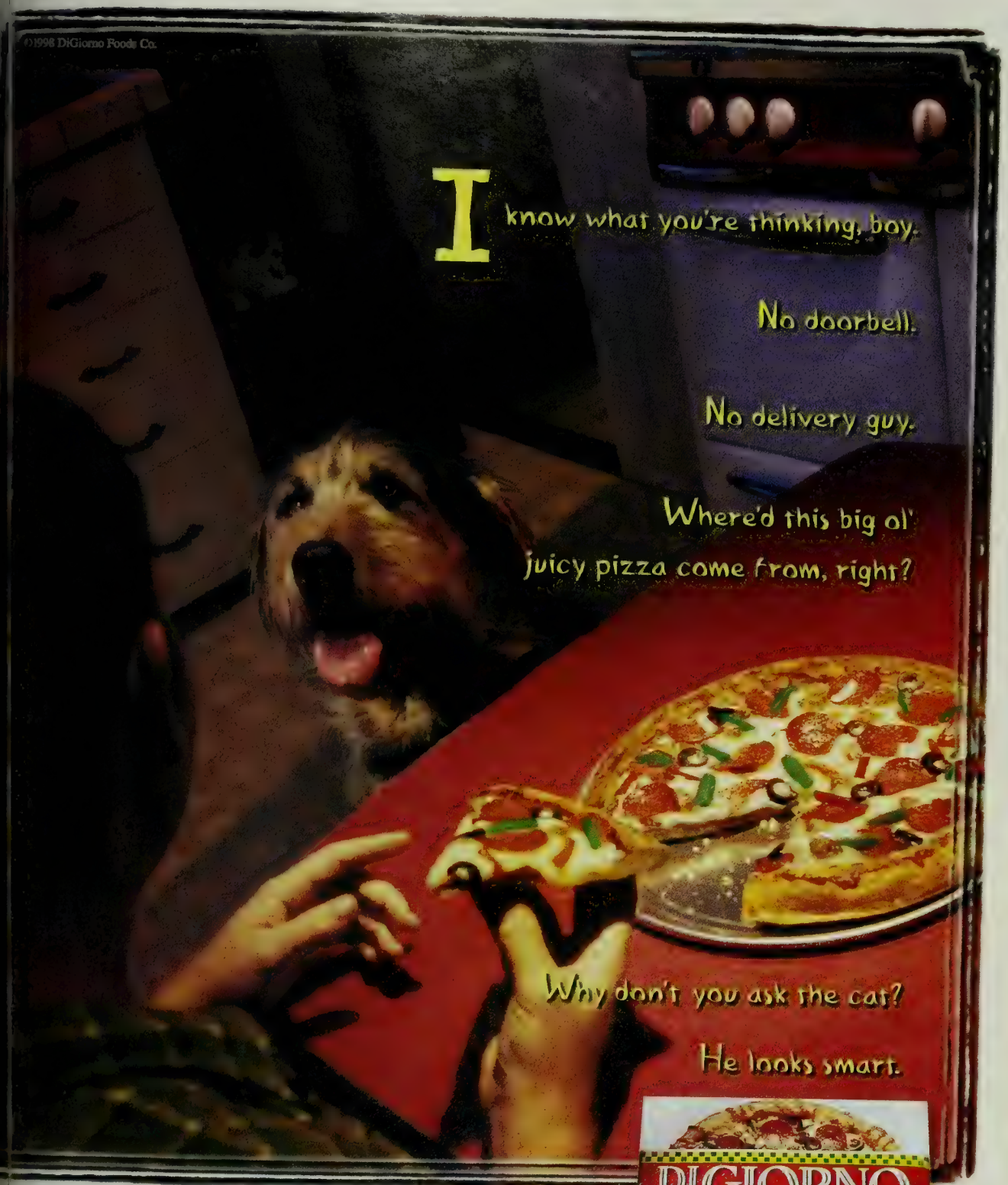
Up-to-the-minute coverage on how to read the players in the Hollywood food chain



BORN AND RAISED IN...	Schaumburg, Illinois	Teheran	818	Mount Kisco, New York	Manhattan	Schaumburg
ALMA MATER	George Washington Junior High	University of New Orleans Film School			Brandeis University	
CURRENT JOB	"Producer"	"Producer"	Wardrobe shopper for *Party of Five*	V.P., worldwide distribution	Judith Regan author	Restaurant
CENTER OF GRAVITY	Bel Air–adjacent	SUNSET PLAZA	Rose Bowl flea market	Burton Way and Doheny	Patio at the Ivy	The Malibu
LUNCH	24-ounce sugar-free chocolate Ultimate Ice Blended at Sunset Plaza Coffee Bean	Clafoutis on Sunset Boulevard	Fred 62 ▶	Medium-range power booth at the Grill	Crustacean on Santa Monica Boulevard	Chicken ba Brentwood Co
NIGHTCLUB	Peninsula Bar	SkyBar	El Carmen	Hamilton's Cigar Lounge ▶	Libby Doheny and Justine Bloomingdale's book club in Brentwood	Kabbal
BIG BREAK	Half-price bus ticket from Schaumburg, Illinois	Family rug store converted into nightclub	Waiting on Sharon Stone at Fred Segal Café	Father pledged Alpha Epsilon Pi with Jonathan Dolgen	Baby-sat Billy Gerber circa 1972	Rhinoplasty
ACCESSORY	Mento Blue Pagenet 2000 beeper	Studded belt with Gucci buckle	Car de-ionizer	Pocket cigar guillotine	Universal rights to Winston Groom's next three books	Gwyneth Paltrow ▶
BIG COOL FRIEND	Bob Evans	Rande Gerber ▶	Drew Barrymore ▶	Peter Guber	Oprah	Dalai
LITTLE BUDDY	◀ Charlie Sheen	Hirsute younger sister	Natasha Wagner	D-Girl	Glamazon Wasp assistant	◀ Bill Cl
GYM	Butts on Beverly	Peninsula Hotel roof pool	Pilates Studio	Sports Club L.A.	Private yoga sessions with Gurmukh	Valerie W Muscle
CAR	Mercedes SLK ◀ Kompressor	Humvee ▶	Black VW Jetta GL	Jaguar XK8 convertible	Chevy Yukon	◀ LM002 sports
JUNK FOOD	RU-486	Low-fat halvah	Red Vines	Jamba Juice kiwi-berry burner with Life Juice boost	Peanut-butter-white-chocolate-swirl frozen yogurt with scrapple and nonfat hot fudge topping from the Cultured Class	Lays fat-free KC Masterpiece potato chips
SUPPOSED WEEKEND WHEREABOUTS	"Visiting friends"	Plaza Athénée, Paris	The ashram		On location in North Carolina	Cannes
ACTUAL WEEKEND WHEREABOUTS	Plaza Athénée, Paris ▶	Fort Lauderdale	The Citadel outlets on I-5	Hazelden	Lipid-buster Wonder Weekend at the Golden Door	Plaza Athénée, Paris
ASPIRATION	No pre-nup	To be comped everywhere	To be Ingrid Casares	Yasmine ◀ Bleeth	To bring Margaret Atwood to the big screen	Getting
BEST-KEPT SECRET	Black book	Has never been to Paris	Bat Mitzvah ◀ video	Big hips	Passed on *Gump*	Wedding-nig
HOME DÉCOR BY...	Abbey Rents	Roche-Bobois	"You know, I'm real about IKEA."	Oversize white everything from Kreiss	"Nubby Chic," by Rose Tarlow	Franco-Moroc by Naon
LICENSE-PLATE FRAME	MY OTHER CAR IS A HUMMER	MUMUDA'S DUDESKI CRUISER	HEAL THE BAY	HORNBURG JAGUAR	MY CHILD IS A CROSSROADS HONOR STUDENT	HERE TODAY, GONE TO MAUI
DYING TO WORK WITH...	◀ Adnan Khashoggi	Christopher Lambert ▶	Paul Thomas Anderson ▶	Bryan Lourd and Kevin Huvane	Hillary Clinton	John Cassav

—RICHARD RUSHFIELD and ADAM

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ALL THE PRESIDENT'S (SE) MEN

The Preview of the Movie of the Scandal



Christy Turlington as PAULA JONES (purported propositionee)



Shoshanna Lonstein as MONICA LEWINSKY (whistle-blower)



Nathan Lane as THE PRESIDENT



Chevy Chase as KENNETH STARR (nonconspirator)



Danny Aiello as WILLIAM GINSBURG (chat-show guest)



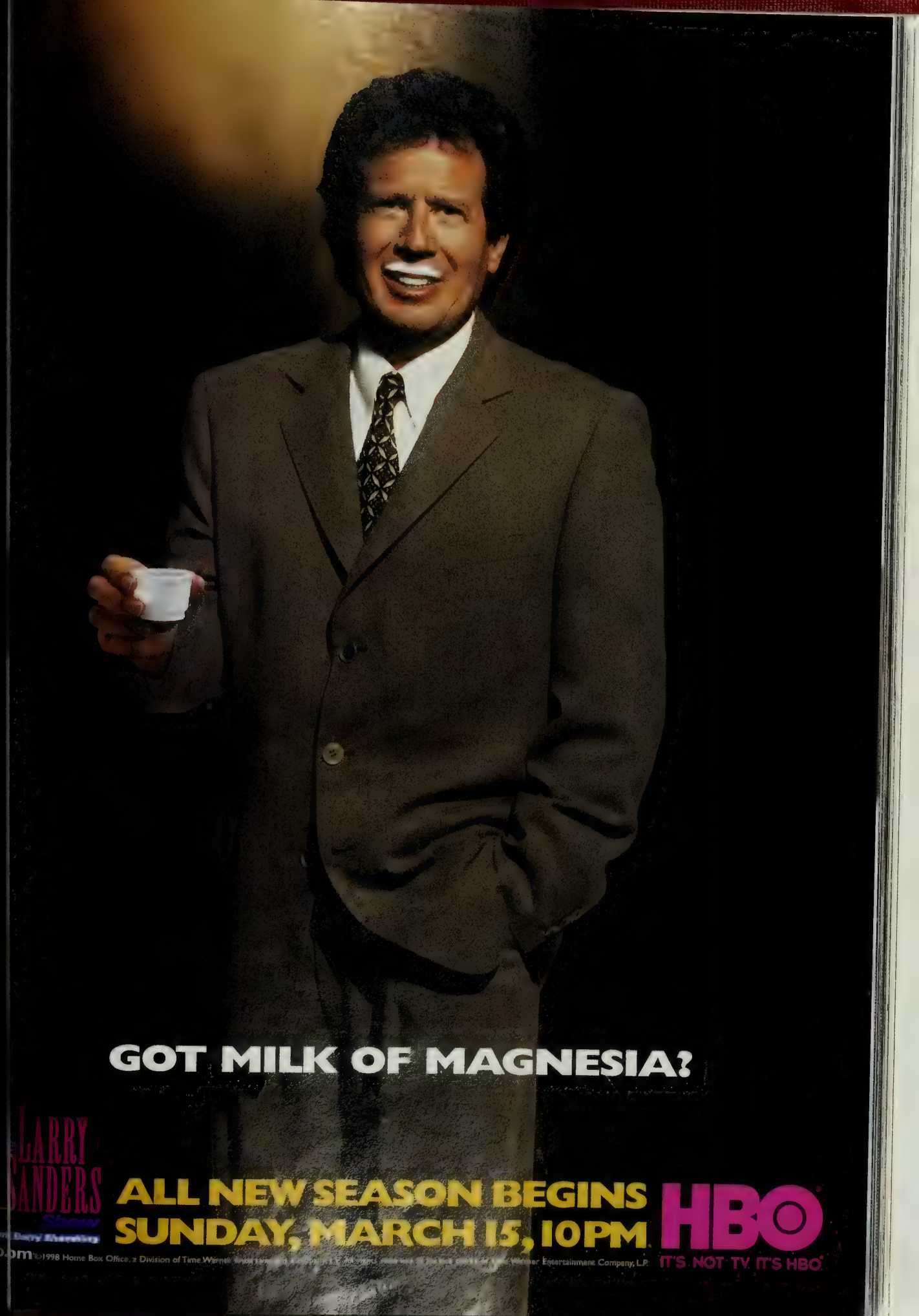
Ellen DeGeneres as HILLARY CLINTON (first wife)



Angela Lansbury as LUCIANNE GOLDBERG (agent provocateur)



Penny Marshall as LINDA TRIPP (watchdog)


GOT MILK OF MAGNESIA?
LARRY SANDERS Show
ALL NEW SEASON BEGINS
SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 10PM
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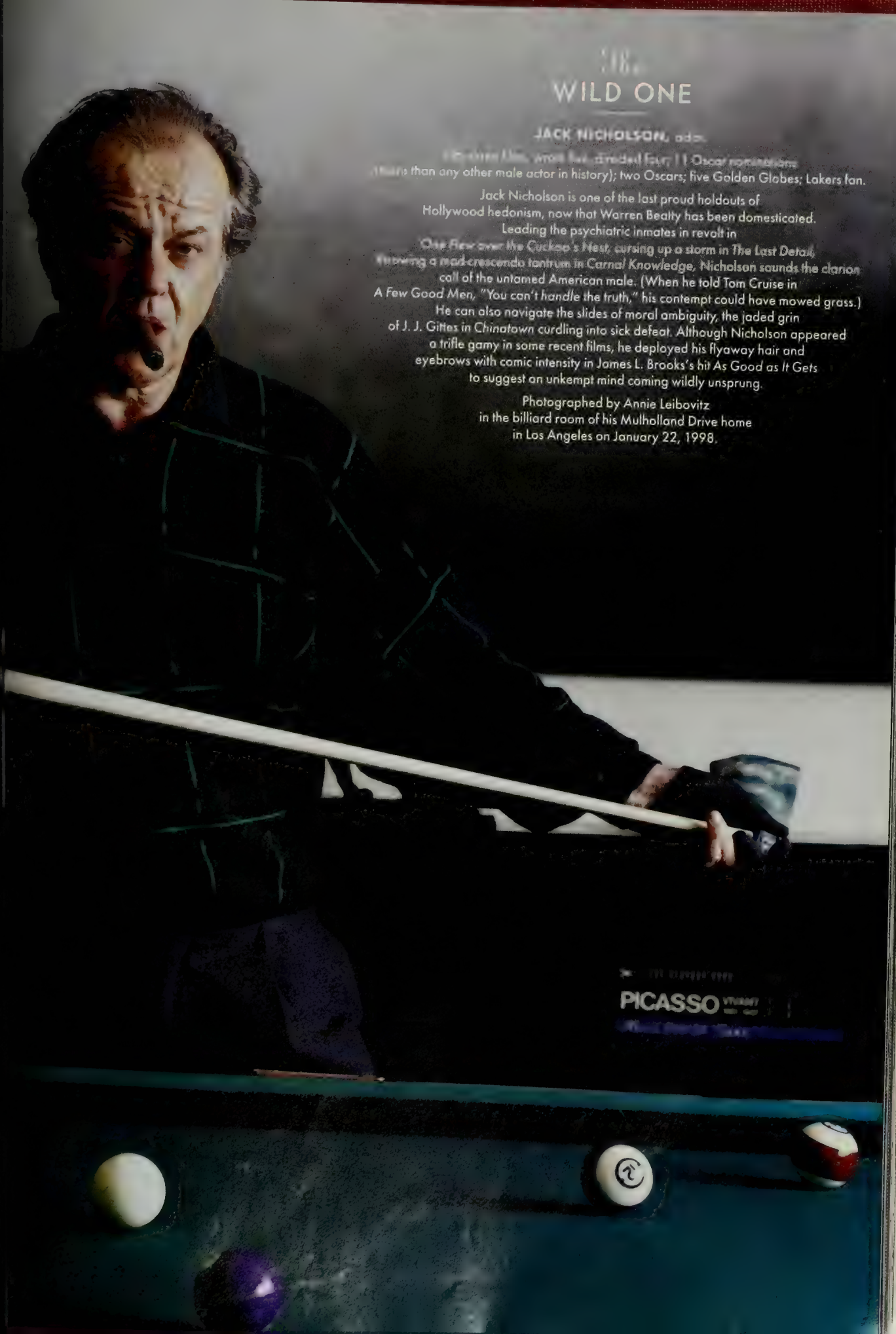
VANITY FAIR
APRIL 1998

The POWER & GLAMOUR of Hollywood

1998

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ
HELMUT NEWTON, HERB RITTS, SNOWDON, AND BRUCE WEBER
TEXT BY JAMES WOLCOTT





THE WILD ONE

JACK NICHOLSON, actor, director, writer, producer, [illegible] Oscar nominations (more than any other male actor in history); two Oscars; five Golden Globes; Lakers fan.

Jack Nicholson is one of the last proud holdouts of Hollywood hedonism, now that Warren Beatty has been domesticated. Leading the psychiatric inmates in revolt in *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, cursing up a storm in *The Last Detail*, blowing a mad crescendo tantrum in *Carnal Knowledge*, Nicholson sounds the clarion call of the untamed American male. (When he told Tom Cruise in *A Few Good Men*, "You can't *handle* the truth," his contempt could have mowed grass.) He can also navigate the slides of moral ambiguity, the jaded grin of J. J. Gittes in *Chinatown* curdling into sick defeat. Although Nicholson appeared a trifle gamy in some recent films, he deployed his flyaway hair and eyebrows with comic intensity in James L. Brooks's hit *As Good as It Gets* to suggest an unkempt mind coming wildly unsprung.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz in the billiard room of his Mulholland Drive home in Los Angeles on January 22, 1998.



The HEAVENLY CREATURE

KATE WINSLET, actress.

Six films; two Oscar nominations, for *Sense and Sensibility* and *Titanic;* called "Combat Kate" due to her predilection for rolling cigarettes and wearing motorcycle boots.

Kate Winslet may look like a cream puff, but at a young age (born 1975) she has proven herself ribbed with stone. A revelation as the mommy-killing schoolgirl in *Heavenly Creatures,* a passionate delight in *Sense and Sensibility,* Winslet bared herself to the raw elements in the adaptation of Thomas Hardy's *Jude.* Next, she won the role of Ophelia in *Hamlet,* which required her to be shaken like a mop by Kenneth Branagh's high-strung prince. *Jude* and *Hamlet* were mere tune-up matches for the marathon slugfest with adversity that was James Cameron's magnificent *Titanic.* (She missed the Hollywood premiere, distraught over the death of her former boyfriend Stephen Tredre.) In the film's most lyrical moment, her arms outstretched at the ship's prow, she angelically soared.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz at Aquarium Design International in Chestnut Ridge, New York, on January 12, 1998.



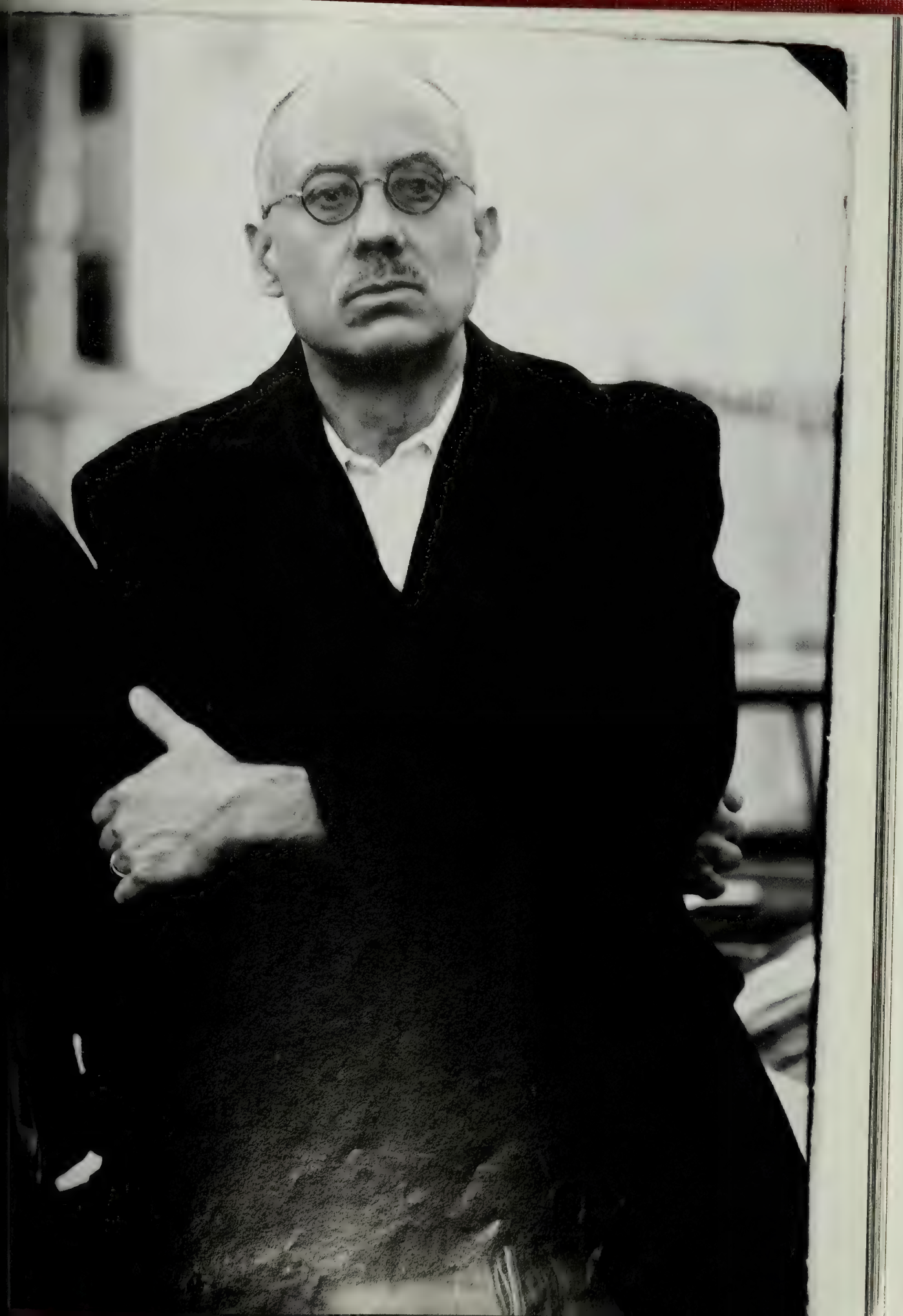


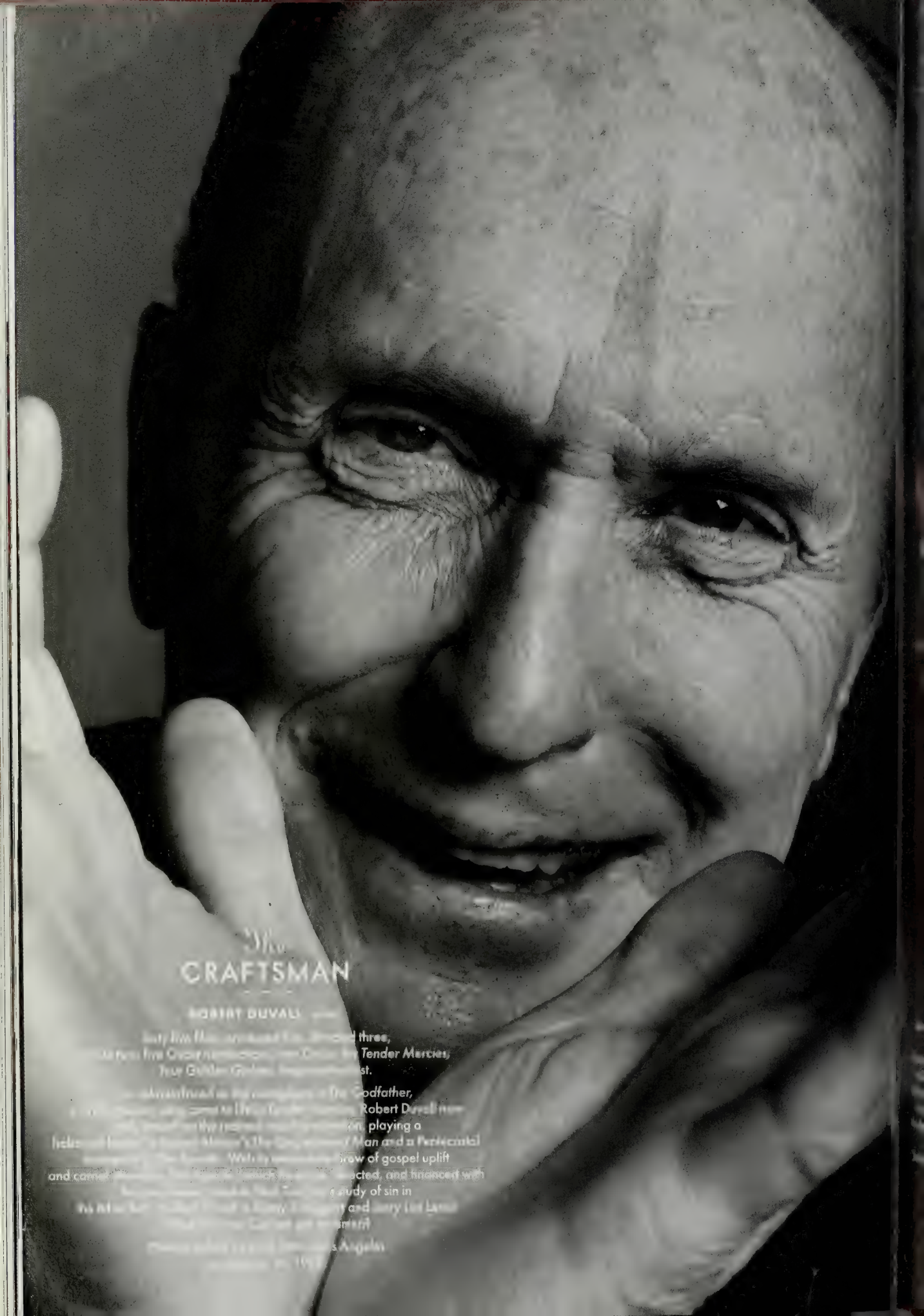
The HARD GUYS

BRIAN HELGELAND, CURTIS HANSON, and JAMES ELLROY

The brain trust behind *L.A. Confidential*
(nominated for nine Oscars) brought out each other's personal best.
Translating James Ellroy's *roman noir* to the screen,
director and co-scriptwriter Curtis Hanson (whose *The Bedroom Window* and
The River Wild were passable) and co-scriptwriter Brian Helgeland
(who bears guilt and responsibility for *Assassins* and *The Postman*) transcended
themselves to do justice to the juicy material set before them.
The result: the liveliest serpentine tour of L.A. after dark since Howard Hawks's
The Big Sleep, a jazzy expedition—part *Dragnet*,
part *Chinatown*—that faithfully reproduced Ellroy's angry turbulence
and sullen compassion. Autopsies of paradise lost
are seldom this invigorating.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz
in the parking lot of the Pacific Dining Car in Los Angeles
on January 25, 1998.





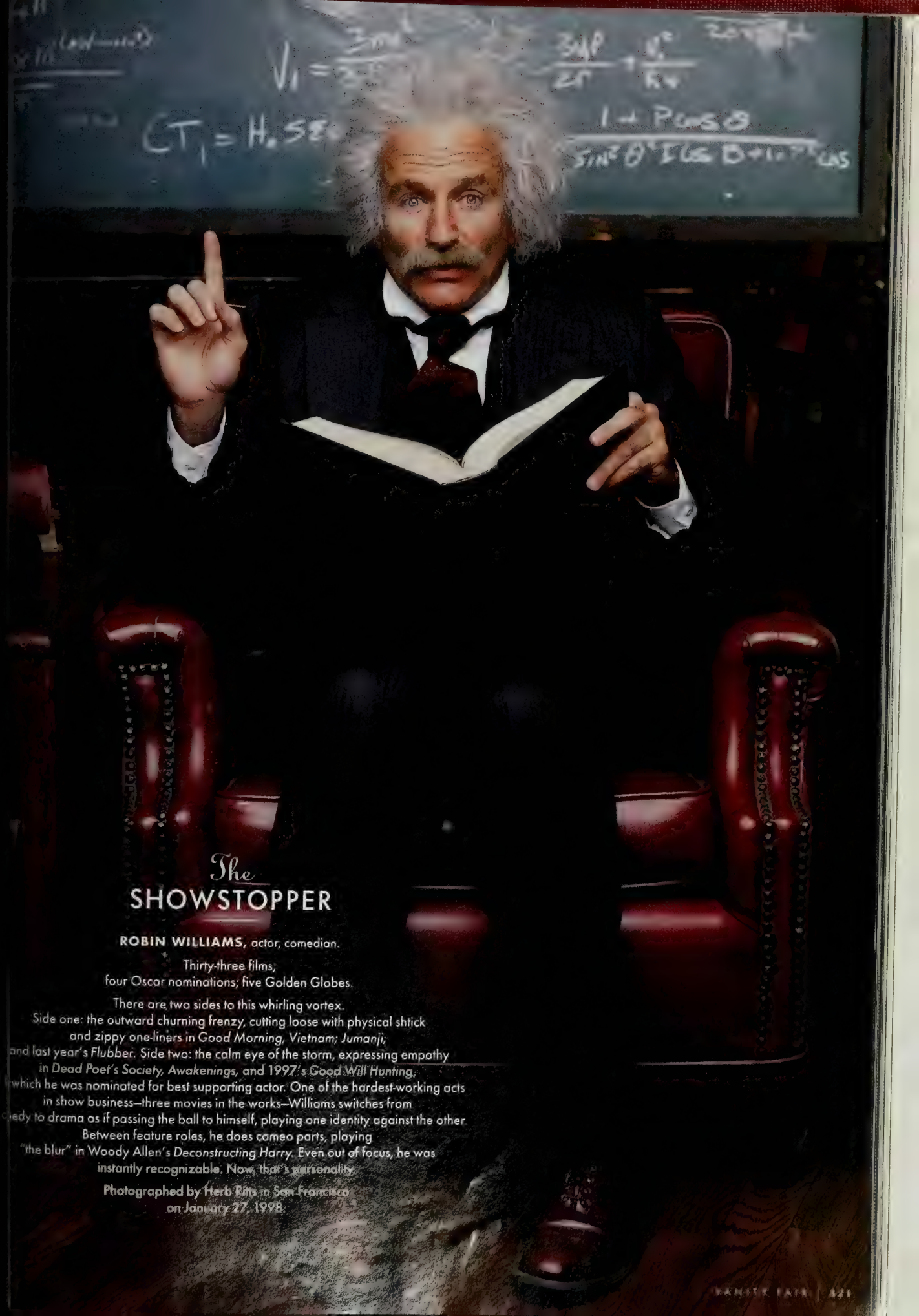
The CRAFTSMAN

ROBERT DUVALL

…ity has thrice nominated him, three,
…ds from Oscar nominations for *Tender Mercies*,
True Grit and *The Apostle*.

…ominated as the consigliere in *The Godfather*,
…ame to Hollywood, Robert Duvall now
…ed on the legend of Coppola, playing a
…ickster and healer in Horton Foote's *The Chase*, *Man and a Pentecostal*
…ssenger. The Apostle. With its unmistakable brew of gospel uplift
and comic …, it was written, directed, and financed with
… a study of sin in
… and very Last Lamb
…ist.

…Angeles



The SHOWSTOPPER

ROBIN WILLIAMS, actor, comedian.

Thirty-three films;
four Oscar nominations; five Golden Globes.

There are two sides to this whirling vortex.
Side one: the outward churning frenzy, cutting loose with physical shtick
and zippy one-liners in *Good Morning, Vietnam; Jumanji;*
and last year's *Flubber.* Side two: the calm eye of the storm, expressing empathy
in *Dead Poet's Society, Awakenings,* and 1997's *Good Will Hunting,*
which he was nominated for best supporting actor. One of the hardest-working acts
in show business—three movies in the works—Williams switches from
edy to drama as if passing the ball to himself, playing one identity against the other.
Between feature roles, he does cameo parts, playing
"the blur" in Woody Allen's *Deconstructing Harry.* Even out of focus, he was
instantly recognizable. Now, that's personality.

Photographed by Herb Ritts in San Francisco
on January 27, 1998.



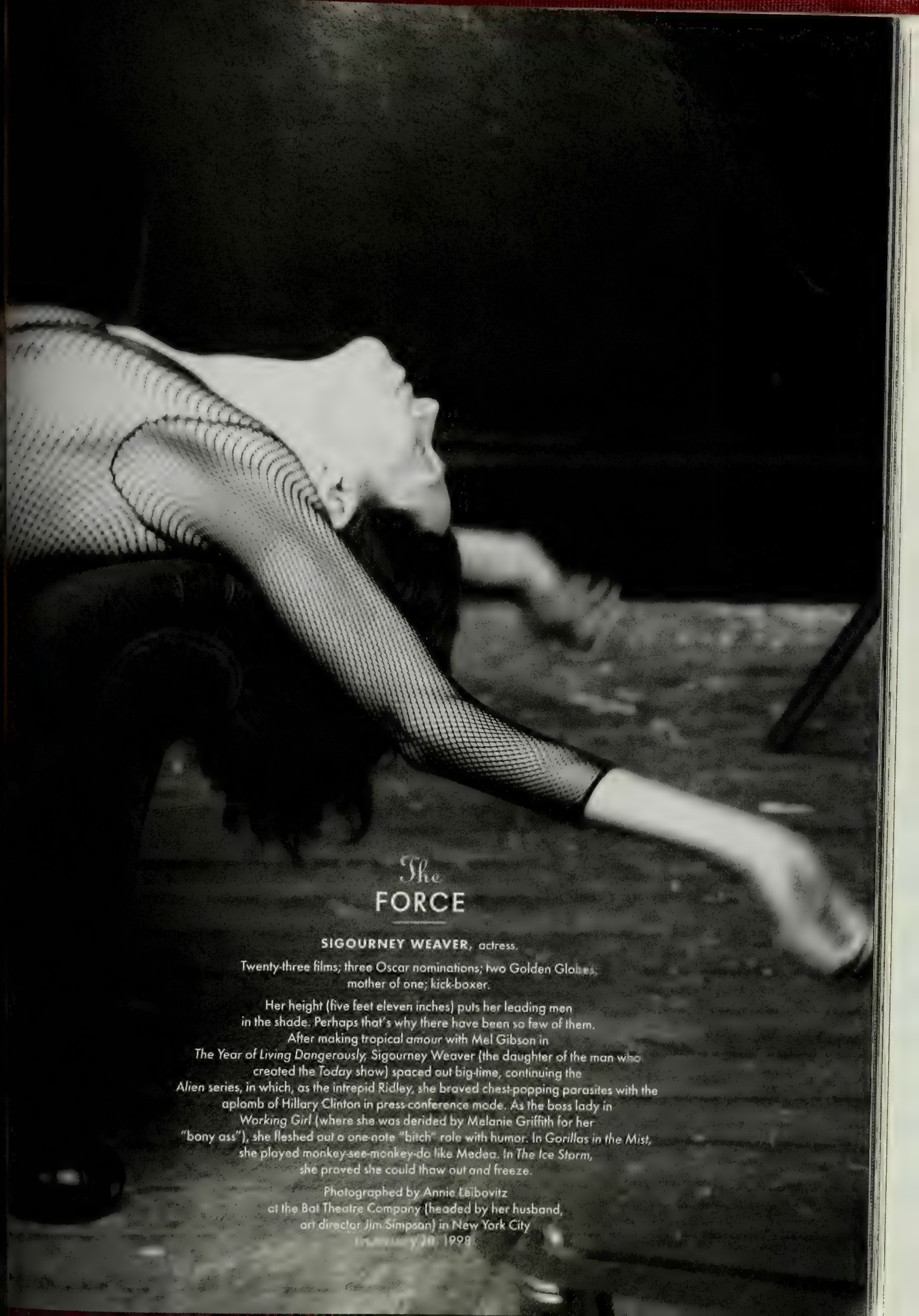
The GIRL NEXT DOOR

HELEN HUNT, actress.

Seventeen films; 19 TV movies;
seven TV series; one Oscar nomination, for *As Good as It Gets*;
four Golden Globes; two Emmys;
lives with actor Hank Azaria, who appeared in *The Birdcage*
and *Great Expectations* and is a regular voice on *The Simpsons*.

Even when Helen Hunt was playing a "troubled teen" in made-for-TV schlockola such as *Angel Dusted*, it was evident that her talent cast a clean, direct line. Her emotions were always strikingly legible; she registered more with a squint than most actors could with a bagful of tics. As she grew, reaching TV stardom as wife to Paul Reiser's prattling husband on *Mad About You*, her line readings developed a delayed snap, her lemony features a fretful ripple. After dodging digitized funnels in *Twister*, Hunt went one-on-one with Jack Nicholson in *As Good as It Gets* as a waitress indulging his cranky ways. Her character was too good for his, but Hunt often outclasses her leading men, yet never comes across as superior. She makes you want them to work harder to become worthy of her.

Photographed with Johnny, her pet Samoyed, by Peggy Sirota at Camp Bluff Lake in the San Bernardino Mountains, California.



The FORCE

SIGOURNEY WEAVER, actress.

Twenty-three films; three Oscar nominations; two Golden Globes; mother of one; kick-boxer.

Her height (five feet eleven inches) puts her leading men in the shade. Perhaps that's why there have been so few of them. After making tropical *amour* with Mel Gibson in *The Year of Living Dangerously*, Sigourney Weaver (the daughter of the man who created the *Today* show) spaced out big-time, continuing the *Alien* series, in which, as the intrepid Ridley, she braved chest-popping parasites with the aplomb of Hillary Clinton in press-conference mode. As the boss lady in *Working Girl* (where she was derided by Melanie Griffith for her "bony ass"), she fleshed out a one-note "bitch" role with humor. In *Gorillas in the Mist*, she played monkey-see-monkey-do like Medea. In *The Ice Storm*, she proved she could thaw out and freeze.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz at the Bat Theatre Company (headed by her husband, art director Jim Simpson) in New York City [illegible] 28, 1998.

The NEWEST WAVE

It takes more than overarching personal vision and knowing when to break for lunch to make a real movie director. It requires mastering a stare that shows you mean business. A 100-yard stare that cuts through bull, silences the crew, and says to a recalcitra "I don't care how messed up you are, come out of that trailer." Arrayed before you are directors, in various developmental stages of thei leadership ability. May the best stare win.

Clockwise from left: Katja von Garnier (*Bandits*), Nick Cassavetes (*She's So Lovely*), Gary Fleder (*Kiss the Girls*), Kevin Smith (*Chas* Iain Softley (*The Wings of the Dove*), Boaz Yakin (*Fresh*), Mimi Leder (*The Peace* Griffin Dunne (*Addicted to Love*), Mark Christopher (*54*), Mary Harron (*I Shot Andy Warhol*), Atom Egoyan (*The Sweet Hereafter*) and Julie Davis (*I Love You . . . Don't Touch Me!*).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4







The NEWEST WAVE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 327

Clockwise from top left: Daisy Mayer (*Party Girl*), Peter Howitt (*Sliding Doors*), George Tillman Jr. (*Soul Food*), Bryan Singer (*The Usual Suspects*), Rob Bowman (*The X-Files*), Theresa Connelly (*Polish Wedding*), Jonas Pate and Josh Pate (*Deceiver*), Kasi Lemmons (*Eve's Bayou*), Forest Whitaker (*Hope Floats*), and Peter Cattaneo (*The Full Monty*).

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz in the lobby of the Chateau Marmont in Hollywood on January 23, 1998

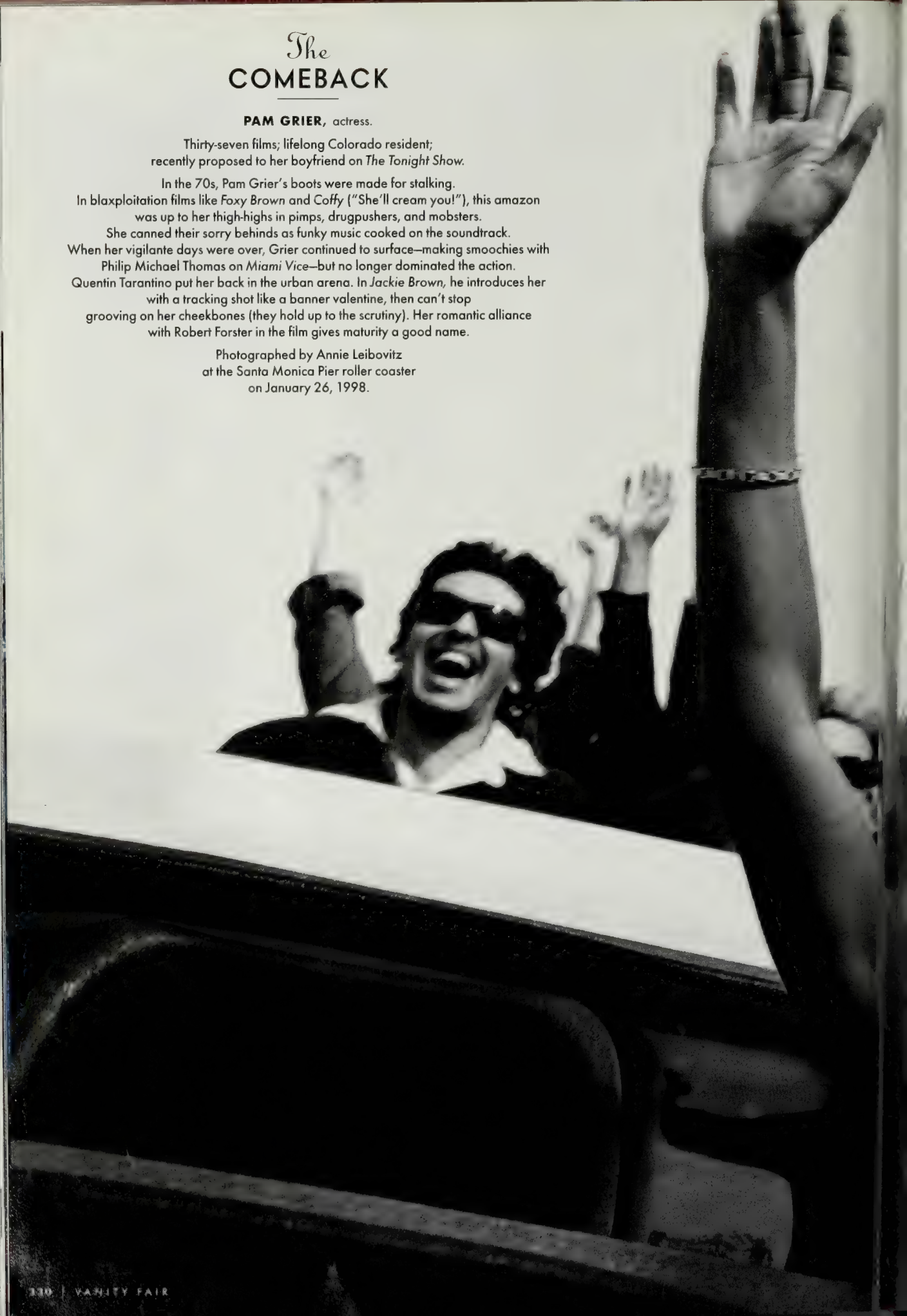
The COMEBACK

PAM GRIER, actress.

Thirty-seven films; lifelong Colorado resident;
recently proposed to her boyfriend on *The Tonight Show.*

In the 70s, Pam Grier's boots were made for stalking.
In blaxploitation films like *Foxy Brown* and *Coffy* ("She'll cream you!"), this amazon
was up to her thigh-highs in pimps, drugpushers, and mobsters.
She canned their sorry behinds as funky music cooked on the soundtrack.
When her vigilante days were over, Grier continued to surface—making smoochies with
Philip Michael Thomas on *Miami Vice*—but no longer dominated the action.
Quentin Tarantino put her back in the urban arena. In *Jackie Brown,* he introduces her
with a tracking shot like a banner valentine, then can't stop
grooving on her cheekbones (they hold up to the scrutiny). Her romantic alliance
with Robert Forster in the film gives maturity a good name.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz
at the Santa Monica Pier roller coaster
on January 26, 1998.







The SOPHISTICATES

JAMES IVORY, director.
Twenty-seven films; three Oscar nominations.

ISMAIL MERCHANT, filmmaker, cookbook author, restaurateur;
produced 40 films, directed 4, acted in 7; three Oscar nominations.

Their partnership going back 36 years, Ismail Merchant and James Ivory must long for the days when they had nostalgia all to themselves. With their adaptations of Henry James and E. M. Forster, they held a monopoly on "white-linen movies," the Merchant Ivory credit practically a designer label. Their best films (*A Room with a View, Howard's End, The Remains of the Day*) are more than candlelit tours of stately mansions; they're character studies of well-bred people who are defined less by what they do than by what they renounce. So successful has their collaboration been that the screen is aflutter with costume dramas—everybody, even action-king James Cameron, is twirling parasols. Their next project: *A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries,* due this summer.

Photographed by Gasper Tringale at a Ukrainian monastery in Glen Cove, Long Island, on February 6, 1998.

The GOOD KIDS

JOAN CUSACK, actress.
Twenty films; two Oscar nominations; married to Chicago attorney Richard Burke; one son.

JOHN CUSACK, actor.
Thirty-five films; spotted spooning with Minnie Driver at Sundance.

Brother and sister, Chicago natives John and Joan Cusack were paired on-screen in Cameron Crowe's *Say Anything . . .* , where John's Lloyd Dobler (one of the few memorable names in recent film) proclaimed his love for Ione Skye by holding a boom box over his head, letting the music rain over him. Joan played his sister, too busy raising a child for such theatrics. Apart, he explored incest issues with Anjelica Huston in *The Grifters* and was nearly mentored into extinction by Al Pacino in *City Hall;* she brought a quirky, addled normality to her roles in *Broadcast News, Working Girl,* and *In & Out.* Last year they were reunited in *Grosse Pointe Blank,* which John co-wrote, co-produced, and starred in, playing a hip hit man attending a high-school reunion. Joan played his secretary, ably juggling his rubout schedule.

Photographed by Sam Jones in the kitchen of a house in Hancock Park, Los Angeles, on January 17, 1998.





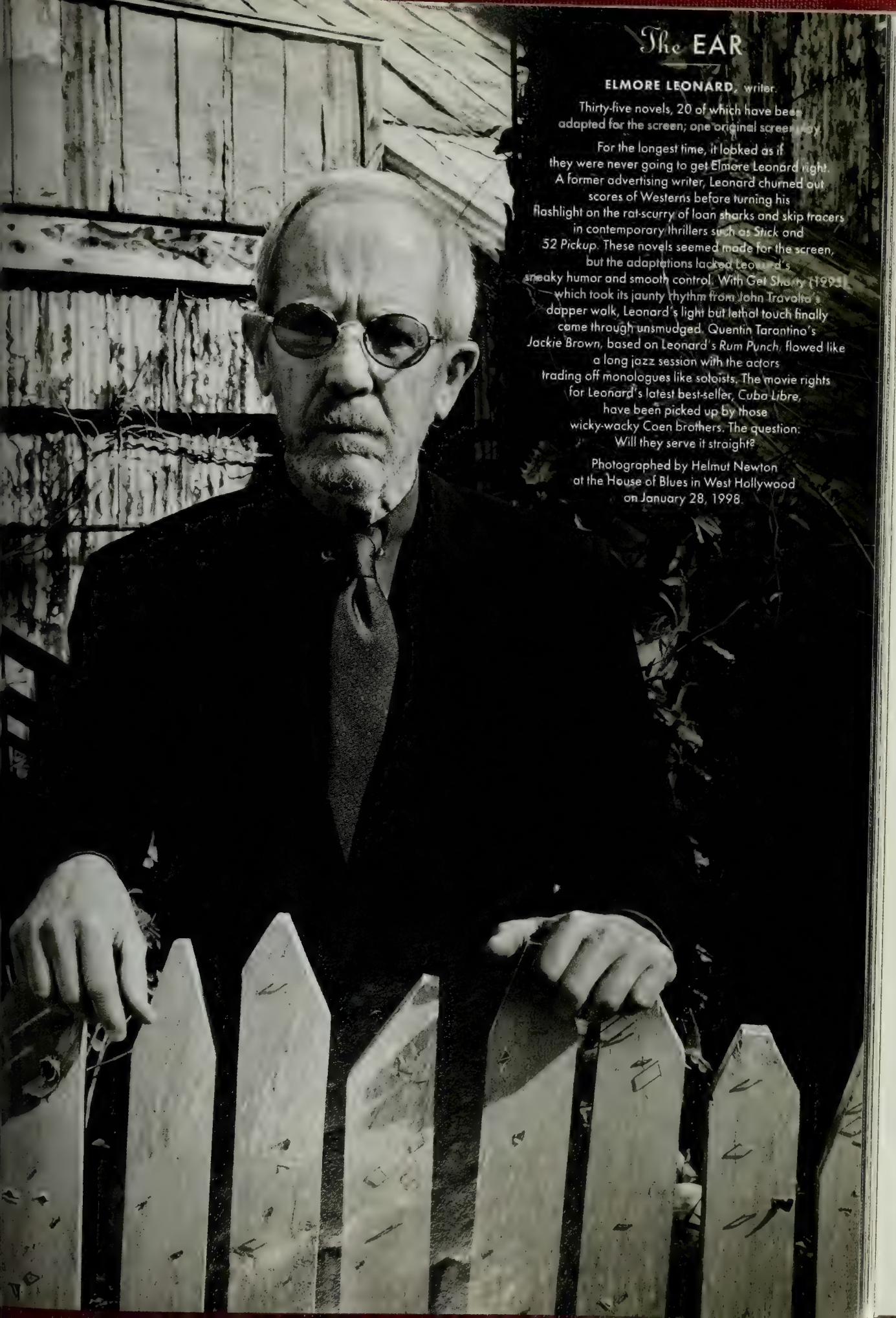
The VIRTUOSO

KEVIN KLINE, actor.

Twenty films; one Oscar, for *A Fish Called Wanda*; two Tony Awards; married for nine years to actress Phoebe Cates; two children.

Light comedy is a dying art, and Kevin Kline is among the last of the grasshoppers. A graduate of Juilliard, he began Streep-side in *Sophie's Choice*, represented his fellow baby-boomers in *The Big Chill* and *Grand Canyon*, but achieved pure helium as a farceur in *A Fish Called Wanda*, *I Love You to Death*, *Soapdish*, and *Dave*. Last year he was catapulted out of the closet in *In & Out* and committed infidelity in *The Ice Storm*; this year he will be gluing on fuzzy whiskers as the master of disguise Artemus Gordon in *The Wild, Wild West*.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz on West 43rd Street in New York City on January 5, 1998.



The EAR

ELMORE LEONARD, writer.

Thirty-five novels, 20 of which have been adapted for the screen; one original screenplay.

For the longest time, it looked as if they were never going to get Elmore Leonard right. A former advertising writer, Leonard churned out scores of Westerns before turning his flashlight on the rat-scurry of loan sharks and skip tracers in contemporary thrillers such as *Stick* and *52 Pickup*. These novels seemed made for the screen, but the adaptations lacked Leonard's sneaky humor and smooth control. With *Get Shorty* (1995), which took its jaunty rhythm from John Travolta's dapper walk, Leonard's light but lethal touch finally came through unsmudged. Quentin Tarantino's *Jackie Brown*, based on Leonard's *Rum Punch*, flowed like a long jazz session with the actors trading off monologues like soloists. The movie rights for Leonard's latest best-seller, *Cuba Libre*, have been picked up by those wicky-wacky Coen brothers. The question: Will they serve it straight?

Photographed by Helmut Newton at the House of Blues in West Hollywood on January 28, 1998.

The NEW SCHOOL

CHRIS TUCKER, actor, comedian.
Five films; will be paid $7 million to star in his next film, *Double-O-Soul.*

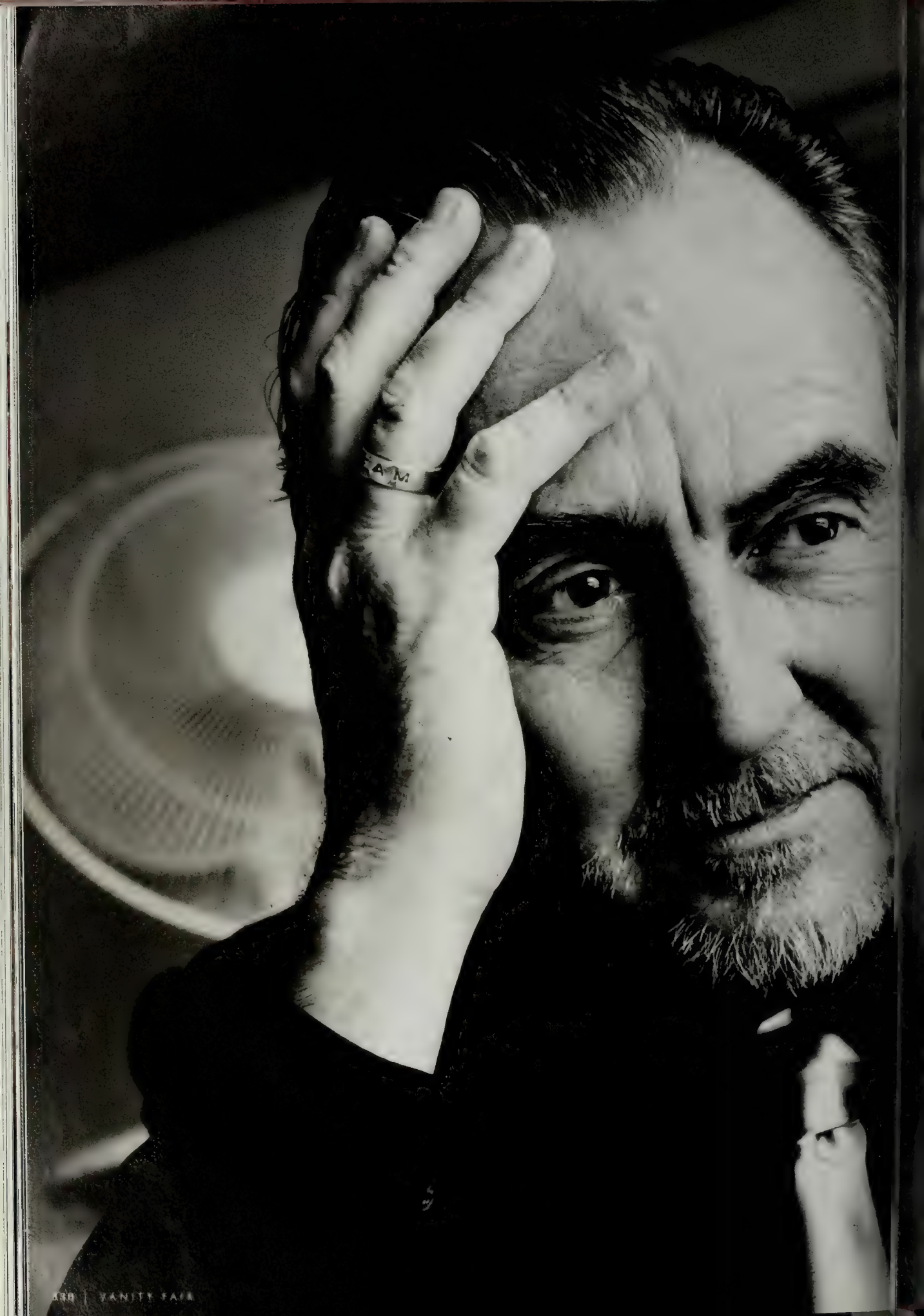
CHRIS ROCK, actor, comedian.
Eight films; four TV shows, including three seasons on *Saturday Night Live;* two CDs; married to Malaak Compton-Rock.

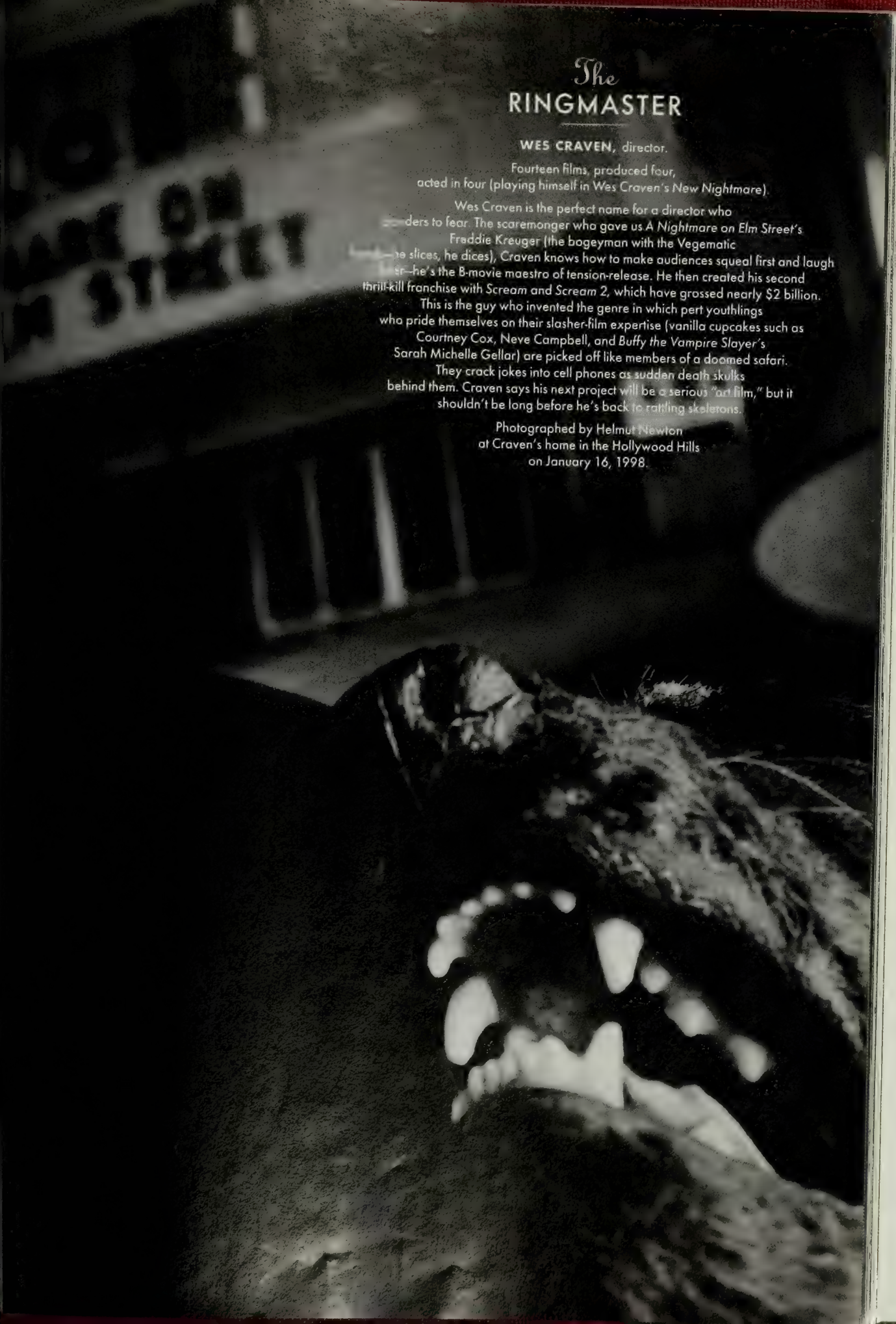
The two Chrises practice projectile comedy, their smart mouths doubling as bazookas. There's no layer of hypocrisy or pretense they can't crack. Honorary sons of Richard Pryor, both have successfully channeled the strut and spontaneity of live comedy into other media. The 33-year-old Rock has reaped an HBO talk show, a book deal (*Rock This!*), commercial endorsements (Li'l Penny in the Nike ads), and movie gigs (the upcoming *Lethal Weapon 4*). After sidekick roles in low-budget films like *Friday* (where he played Smokey the pothead), Tucker, 25, jazzed up Luc Besson's *The Fifth Element* as a freaky-deaky disc jockey, got whacked by Samuel Jackson in *Jackie Brown,* and will be seen ducking harmful objects in a new Jackie Chan film.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz in Los Angeles on January 24, 1998.









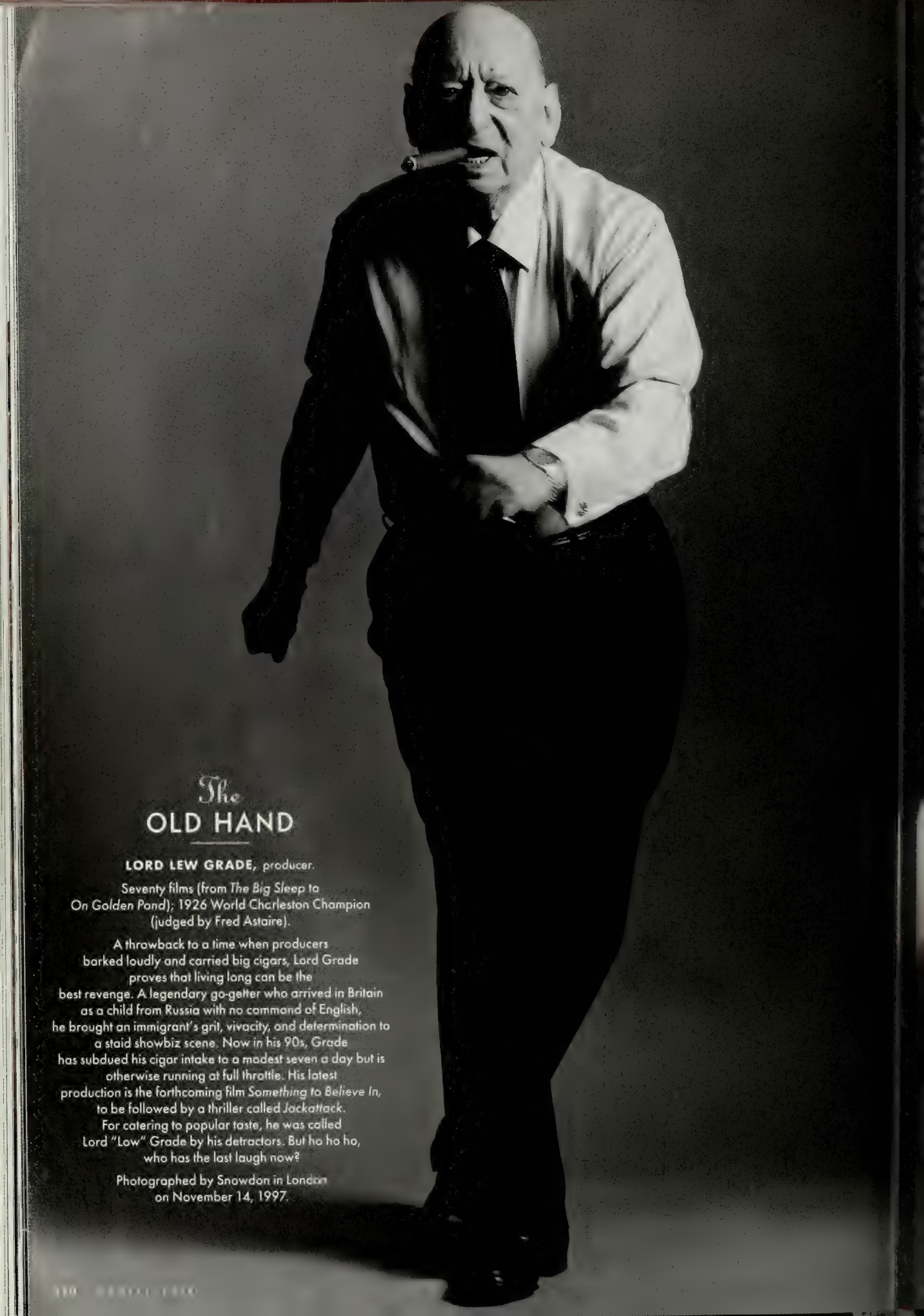
The RINGMASTER

WES CRAVEN, director.

Fourteen films, produced four,
acted in four (playing himself in *Wes Craven's New Nightmare*).

Wes Craven is the perfect name for a director who
[illegible]ders to fear. The scaremonger who gave us *A Nightmare on Elm Street's*
Freddie Kreuger (the bogeyman with the Vegematic
[illegible]e slices, he dices), Craven knows how to make audiences squeal first and laugh
[illegible]r—he's the B-movie maestro of tension-release. He then created his second
thrill-kill franchise with *Scream* and *Scream 2*, which have grossed nearly $2 billion.
This is the guy who invented the genre in which pert youthlings
who pride themselves on their slasher-film expertise (vanilla cupcakes such as
Courtney Cox, Neve Campbell, and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer's*
Sarah Michelle Gellar) are picked off like members of a doomed safari.
They crack jokes into cell phones as sudden death skulks
behind them. Craven says his next project will be a serious "art film," but it
shouldn't be long before he's back to rattling skeletons.

Photographed by Helmut Newton
at Craven's home in the Hollywood Hills
on January 16, 1998.



The OLD HAND

LORD LEW GRADE, producer.

Seventy films (from *The Big Sleep* to *On Golden Pond*); 1926 World Charleston Champion (judged by Fred Astaire).

A throwback to a time when producers barked loudly and carried big cigars, Lord Grade proves that living long can be the best revenge. A legendary go-getter who arrived in Britain as a child from Russia with no command of English, he brought an immigrant's grit, vivacity, and determination to a staid showbiz scene. Now in his 90s, Grade has subdued his cigar intake to a modest seven a day but is otherwise running at full throttle. His latest production is the forthcoming film *Something to Believe In*, to be followed by a thriller called *Jackattack*. For catering to popular taste, he was called Lord "Low" Grade by his detractors. But ho ho ho, who has the last laugh now?

Photographed by Snowdon in London on November 14, 1997.

The VISION



KIM BASINGER, actress

Twenty films; one Oscar nomination, *Confidential*; one Golden Globe; married ce 1993 to Alec Baldwin (whom she the set of 1991's *The Marrying Man*); one daughter; animal-rights activist.

Kim Basinger made erotic d when she let Mickey Rourke overstock her receptive mouth with cherries other goodies in *Nine ½ Weeks* (1986). Although the former Bond Girl *ver Never Again*) has shown herself a good rl as a slapstick vixen in *Blind Date* yne's *World 2*, she seems most luminous n-screen when she simply lets the mpoo her hair (off-camera, she used to rinse with Evian water).

comeback role in last year's pulp-noir *A Confidential*, Basinger wore ks in a Veronica Lake blond waterfall, ntraying a prostitute who services by fulfilling their dirty movie-star fantasies. ehind her facade, her eyes flickered distress signals. In real life she has been rescuer, saving 36 beagles from having eir legs broken for medical testing.

Photographed by Walter Chin
in New York City
on December 15, 1997.



The MYSTERY WOMEN

Clockwise from bottom left: Eva Marie Saint, Tippi Hedren, Suzanne Pleshette, and Janet Leigh

"A woman of elegance," Alfred Hitchcock once wrote, "will never cease to surprise you." A group portrait in elegance, these Hitchcock alumnae—Eva Marie Saint, who shared a railcar berth with Cary Grant in *North by Northwest* as their train sped into a Freudian tunnel; Janet Leigh, whose shower scene in *Psycho* laid the blueprint for a screen-slashing voyeurism; Tippi Hedren, who nearly lost an eye during the making of *The Birds*, where she was pecked and clawed by seagulls; and Hedren's co-star in *The Birds* Suzanne Pleshette—form a sorority of fine bones and distilled graces.

Photographed by Art Streiber at a mansion in La Cañada Flintridge, California, on July 12, 1997.

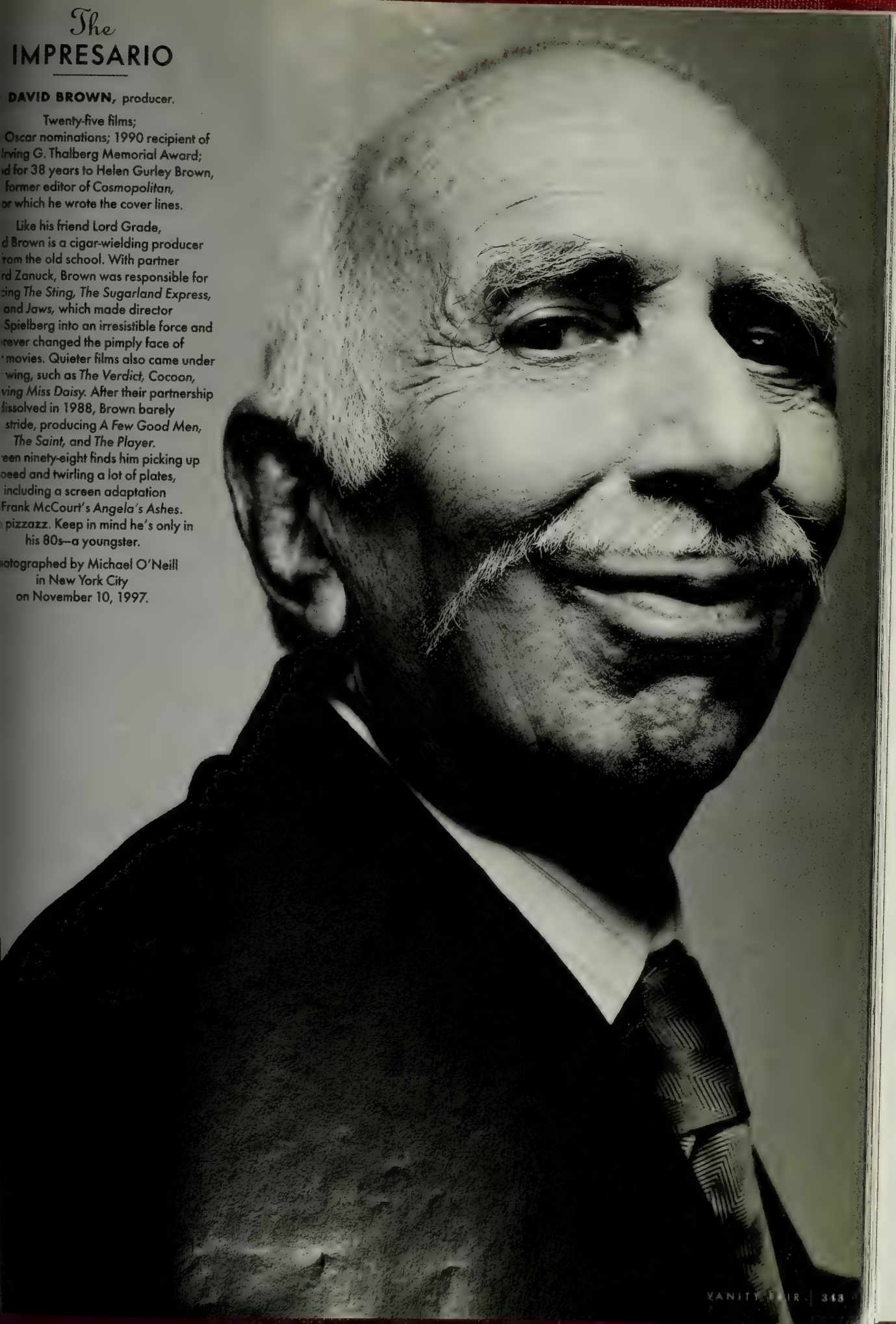
The IMPRESARIO

DAVID BROWN, producer.

Twenty-five films;
Oscar nominations; 1990 recipient of
Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award;
d for 38 years to Helen Gurley Brown,
former editor of *Cosmopolitan*,
or which he wrote the cover lines.

Like his friend Lord Grade,
d Brown is a cigar-wielding producer
rom the old school. With partner
rd Zanuck, Brown was responsible for
cing *The Sting*, *The Sugarland Express*,
and *Jaws*, which made director
Spielberg into an irresistible force and
rever changed the pimply face of
movies. Quieter films also came under
wing, such as *The Verdict*, *Cocoon*,
ving *Miss Daisy*. After their partnership
lissolved in 1988, Brown barely
stride, producing *A Few Good Men*,
The Saint, and *The Player*.
een ninety-eight finds him picking up
peed and twirling a lot of plates,
including a screen adaptation
Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes*.
pizzazz. Keep in mind he's only in
his 80s—a youngster.

otographed by Michael O'Neill
in New York City
on November 10, 1997.










The INVISIBLE MAN

ROBERT WISE, director.

Thirty-nine films, including *The Sound of Music* (1965); seven Oscar nominations; four Oscars; 1966 recipient of the Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award; 1998 recipient of the American Film Institute Life Achievement Award; edited *Citizen Kane*.

Has there ever been a Hollywood director this versatile who cast such an invisible shadow? Wise has enjoyed a career that speaks to two distinct audiences, who tend not to speak to each other. For popular consumption, Wise oversaw spectacles such as *The Hindenburg* and *The Sand Pebbles*, and unleashed the finger-snapping Brylcreem brigades of *West Side Story*. For serious film buffs, there is the Wise who created such trances as *The Curse of the Cat People* and *The Body Snatcher*, the amusingly dignified sci-fi classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, and, perhaps the greatest ghost story ever filmed, *The Haunting*. The hills may remain alive with the sound of music, but it's Wise's smaller, darker excursions that deepen in memory.

Photographed by Michael O'Neill in New York City on November 26, 1997.






The ROCKER

JON BON JOVI, actor, musician.

Six films; eight albums;
Golden Globe (for the song "Blaze of Glory,"
from the movie *Young Guns*); Jersey boy.

Charisma often fails to convert
from one medium to another: few pop stars
are able to make the move from parading
age before screaming nubile hordes to assuming
natural stance on film. Jon Bon Jovi, however,
well master the blend. In the 80s, as the lead singer
Bon Jovi, he lived the *Spinal Tap* life, a classic
rock phallic totem in his lean jeans and lion mane.
(Only Dwight Yoakam did more for denim.)
0s, he caught the acting bug and trimmed his mop to
geable length. When he played the housepainter
Moonlight and Valentino, a role that won him
ing critical notice, his sex appeal wasn't amplified
for the masses but handled matter-of-factly.
Having successfully put himself out
stud, Bon Jovi will soon be seen in *Little City*
and Ed Burns's *Long Time,*
Nothing New, modeling the latest
in lover-boy attitude.

Photographed by
Herb Ritts in Culver City, California,
on January 25, 1998.



The ROCK

TOMMY LEE JONES, actor.

Twenty-five films; 15 TV movies;
two Oscar nominations, including one for *JFK*; one Oscar, for *The Fugitive*;
one Golden Globe; polo player.

Tommy Lee Jones has comic eyes. They're what make him appear ornery, guarded, and menacing when the part warrants it (as in *The Executioner's Song*). But Jones also has a deep, tempered voice, which makes him sound rooted and abiding (see *Coal Miner's Daughter*). He was as potent as a man could be with the neurotic [illegible] played by Jessica Lange in *Blue Sky*. His watchful eyes and sonorous tones give him just rare, notable [illegible] in the movie. As a cranky mobilized to best advantage in *The Fugitive*, where he was the bloodhound leading the dragnet for a head-ducking Harrison Ford. "When I say something's always right," *The Fugitive* [illegible] Jones's knack for the stealth wisecrack. If he had been any more deadpan as an alien exterminator in *Men in Black*, his face would have become a rock formation. At Harvard, Jones was Vice President Al Gore's roommate—now we know where Gore learned to imitate inanimate matter.

Photographed by Helmut Newton
at the Warner Bros. Studios in Burbank, California,
on January 13, 1998.



The PRESENCE

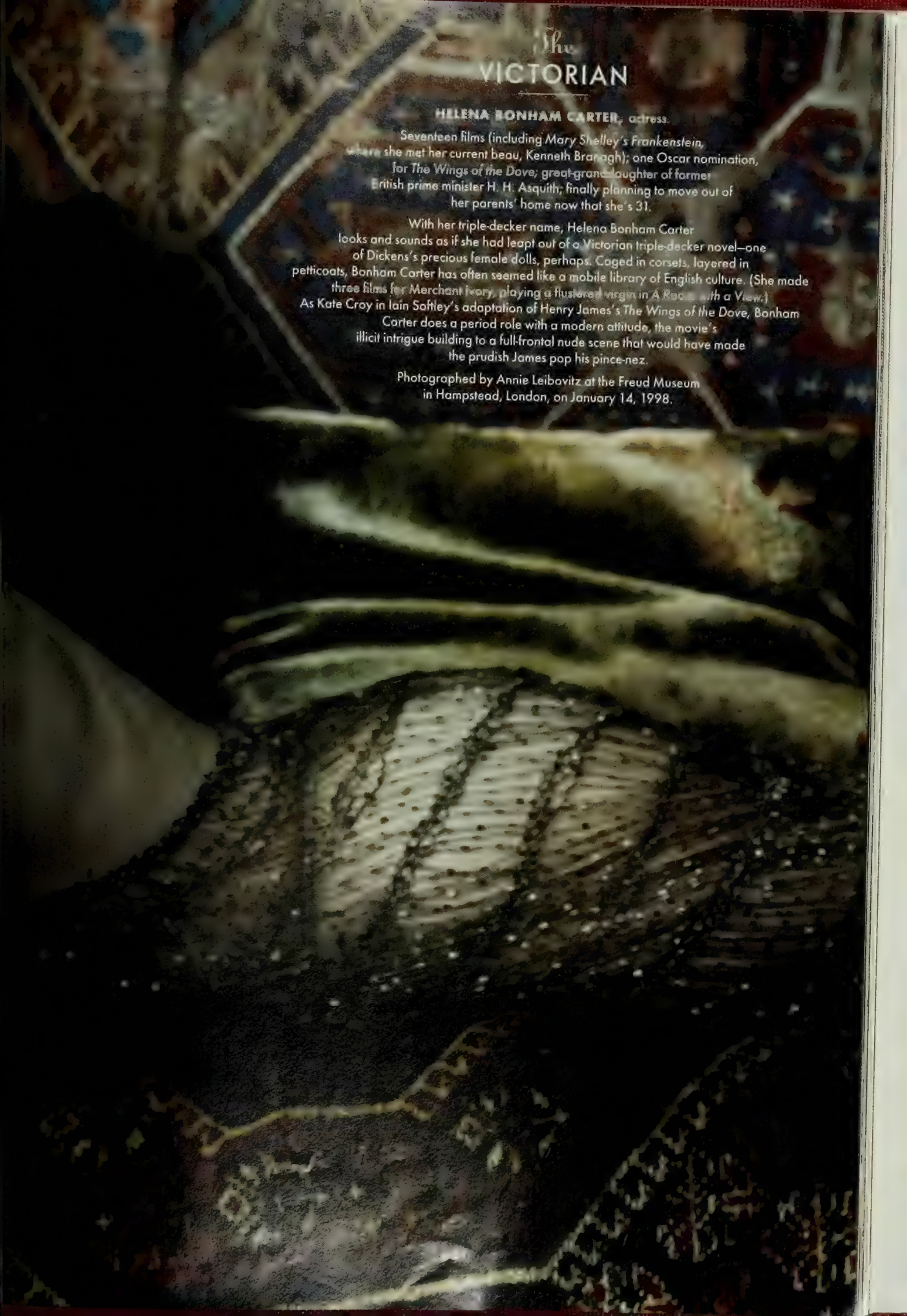
JOAN ALLEN, actress.

Thirteen films; two Oscar nominations.

A member of Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre company since 1977, Joan Allen won a Tony Award on Broadway for her performance opposite John Malkovich in *Burn This* (a role akin to sharing downtown Tokyo with Godzilla). She proved herself flame-retardant enough to portray Dick's Pat in Oliver Stone's *Nixon*, the firm column of her neck bearing as much private anger as public fortitude. Nominated for an Academy Award, Allen went from Washington Witch to Salem Smoker in *The Crucible*, and racked up another nomination. In *The Ice Storm*, she navigates the chilly undertows of Updikean suburban malaise.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz
at the Viceroy in Chelsea, New York City,
on November 18, 1997.





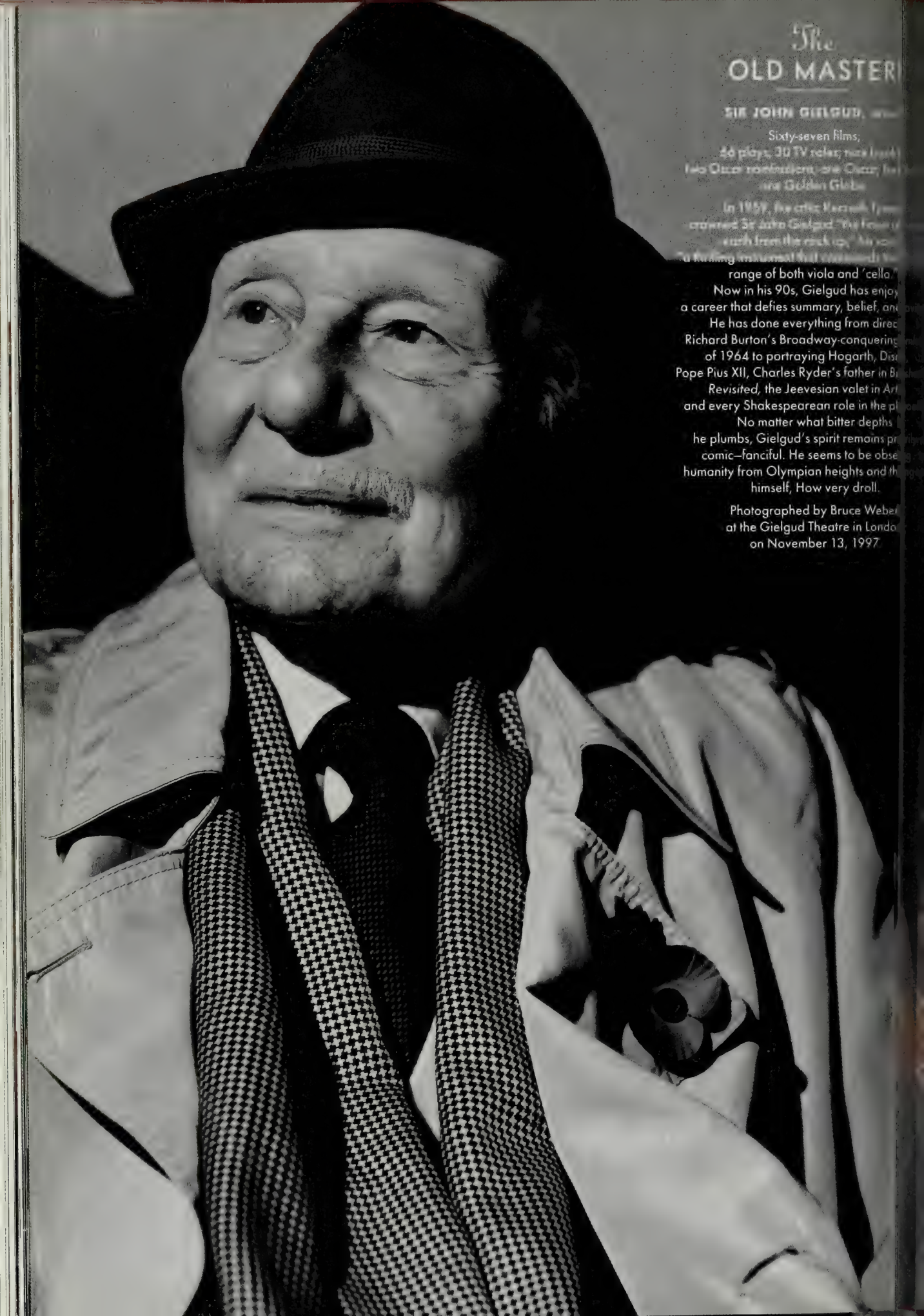
The VICTORIAN

HELENA BONHAM CARTER, actress.

Seventeen films (including *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, where she met her current beau, Kenneth Branagh); one Oscar nomination, for *The Wings of the Dove*; great-granddaughter of former British prime minister H. H. Asquith; finally planning to move out of her parents' home now that she's 31.

With her triple-decker name, Helena Bonham Carter looks and sounds as if she had leapt out of a Victorian triple-decker novel—one of Dickens's precious female dolls, perhaps. Caged in corsets, layered in petticoats, Bonham Carter has often seemed like a mobile library of English culture. (She made three films for Merchant Ivory, playing a flustered virgin in *A Room with a View*.) As Kate Croy in Iain Softley's adaptation of Henry James's *The Wings of the Dove*, Bonham Carter does a period role with a modern attitude, the movie's illicit intrigue building to a full-frontal nude scene that would have made the prudish James pop his pince-nez.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz at the Freud Museum in Hampstead, London, on January 14, 1998.



The OLD MASTER

SIR JOHN GIELGUD,

Sixty-seven films,
60 plays, 30 TV roles, nine [illegible]
two Oscar nominations, one Oscar, [illegible]
one Golden Globe

In 1959, the critic Kenneth [illegible]
crowned Sir John Gielgud "the [illegible]
earth from the neck up," his [illegible]
"a thinking instrument that commands the
range of both viola and 'cello."
Now in his 90s, Gielgud has enjoy
a career that defies summary, belief, an
He has done everything from direc
Richard Burton's Broadway-conquering
of 1964 to portraying Hogarth, Dis
Pope Pius XII, Charles Ryder's father in B
Revisited, the Jeevesian valet in Art
and every Shakespearean role in the pl
No matter what bitter depths
he plumbs, Gielgud's spirit remains pr
comic—fanciful. He seems to be obse
humanity from Olympian heights and th
himself, How very droll.

Photographed by Bruce Webe
at the Gielgud Theatre in Londo
on November 13, 1997

The SCENE-STEALER

VIGGO MORTENSEN, actor.

Twenty-eight films.

Not a household name (yet), Viggo Mortensen has logged a lot of face time on the big screen in the 90s. Perhaps his image doesn't snap into place, because his roles have been so richly varied. He played Henry James's genteel doormat Caspar Goodwood in *The Portrait of a Lady* and furnished unexpected shadings to the chiseled role of Demi Moore's commanding officer in *G.I. Jane*. Critics find in him a romantic waiting to be released. The genie bottle might be this year's *Over the Moon*, an independent film co-produced by Dustin Hoffman. A familiar figure on the L.A. punk scene (he was married to Exene Cervenka, the former lead singer of the punk band X), Mortensen is also a published poet, which probably shouldn't be held against him.

Photographed by Bruce Weber on the roof of the Chelsea Hotel in New York City on December 14, 1997

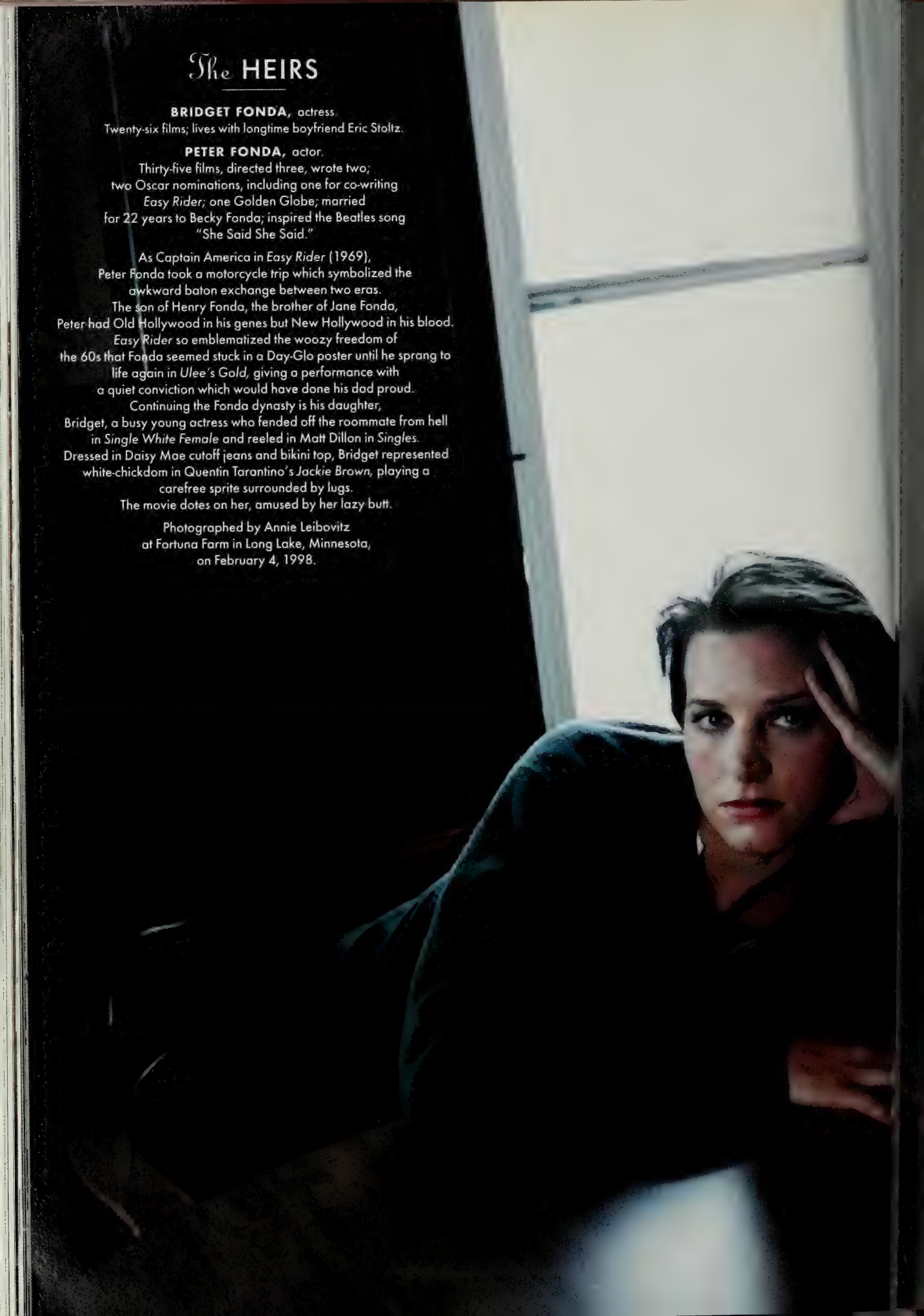
The HEIRS

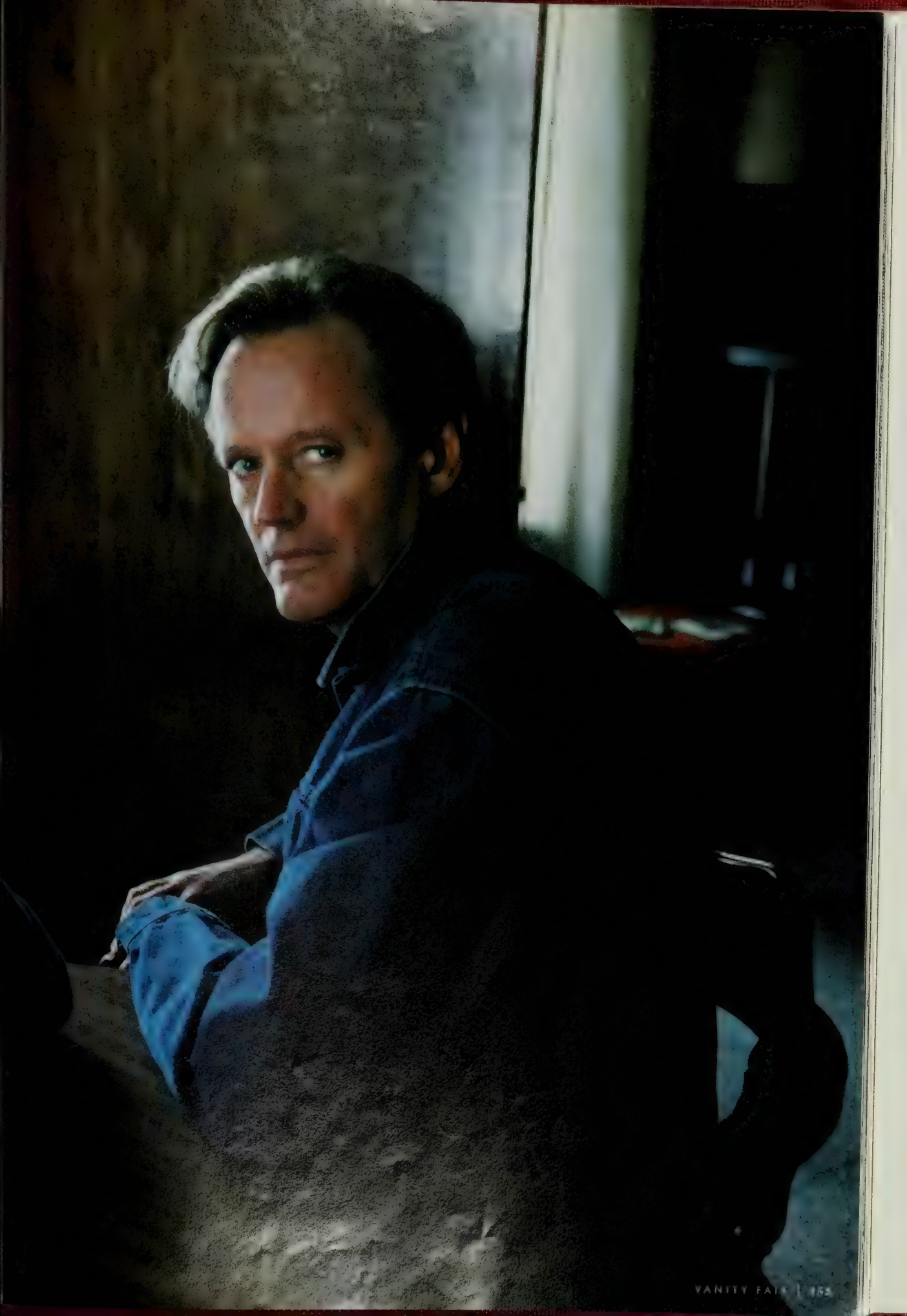
BRIDGET FONDA, actress.
Twenty-six films; lives with longtime boyfriend Eric Stoltz.

PETER FONDA, actor.
Thirty-five films, directed three, wrote two;
two Oscar nominations, including one for co-writing
Easy Rider; one Golden Globe; married
for 22 years to Becky Fonda; inspired the Beatles song
"She Said She Said."

As Captain America in *Easy Rider* (1969),
Peter Fonda took a motorcycle trip which symbolized the
awkward baton exchange between two eras.
The son of Henry Fonda, the brother of Jane Fonda,
Peter had Old Hollywood in his genes but New Hollywood in his blood.
Easy Rider so emblematized the woozy freedom of
the 60s that Fonda seemed stuck in a Day-Glo poster until he sprang to
life again in *Ulee's Gold,* giving a performance with
a quiet conviction which would have done his dad proud.
Continuing the Fonda dynasty is his daughter,
Bridget, a busy young actress who fended off the roommate from hell
in *Single White Female* and reeled in Matt Dillon in *Singles.*
Dressed in Daisy Mae cutoff jeans and bikini top, Bridget represented
white-chickdom in Quentin Tarantino's *Jackie Brown,* playing a
carefree sprite surrounded by lugs.
The movie dotes on her, amused by her lazy butt.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz
at Fortuna Farm in Long Lake, Minnesota,
on February 4, 1998.



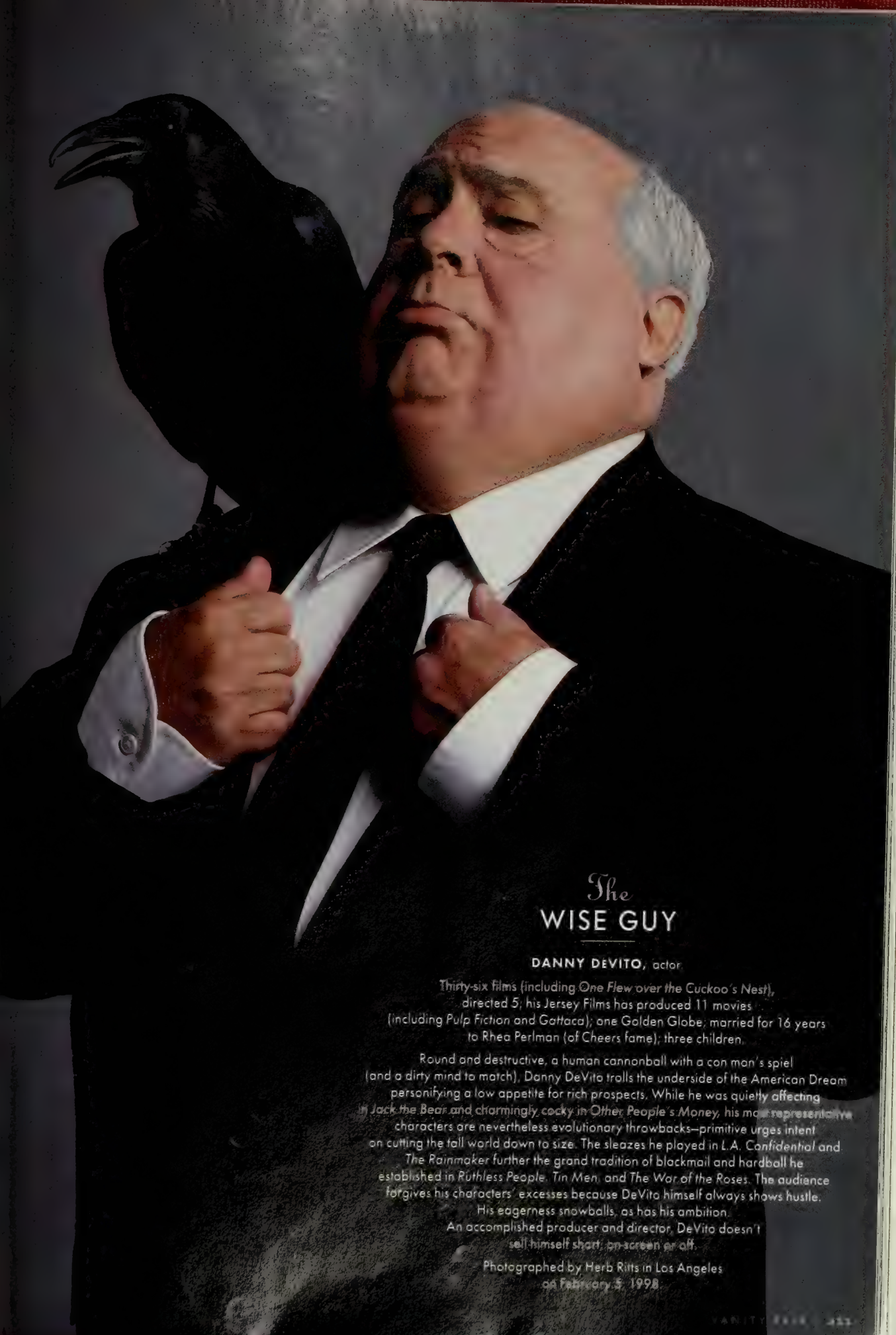


The SCOURGES

The Cahiers du Cinéma crowd they're not. With their Ed Grimley hair and geek glasses—not to mention their combined audience of nearly 400,000 netheads a day—these Web critics represent movie reviewing's revenge of the nerds. Their sneak peeks (Harry Knowles's ain't-it-cool site is a must-click source for production scuttlebutt and preview-screenings reports; he was the early-warning crap detector on *The Postman*) and chain-saw reviews (Jason Katzman, known as Mr. Cranky, defines a "bomb" as a movie that ruptures the space-time continuum) have made them the Matt Drudges of the multiplex. The big studios don't know whether to court them or crush them like infidels. We say, let a thousand blabbermouths bloom.

From left: Patrick Sauriol (www.corona.bc.ca/films), Jason Katzman (www.mrcranky.com), Sean Jordan (www.ZENtertainment.com), Hans Bjordahl (www.mrcranky.com), and Harry Knowles (www.aint-it-cool-news.com).

Photographed by Sam Jones in Los Angeles on January 31, 1998.



The WISE GUY

DANNY DEVITO, actor

Thirty-six films (including *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*), directed 5; his Jersey Films has produced 11 movies (including *Pulp Fiction* and *Gattaca*); one Golden Globe; married for 16 years to Rhea Perlman (of Cheers fame); three children.

Round and destructive, a human cannonball with a con man's spiel (and a dirty mind to match), Danny DeVito trolls the underside of the American Dream personifying a low appetite for rich prospects. While he was quietly affecting in *Jack the Bear* and charmingly cocky in *Other People's Money*, his most representative characters are nevertheless evolutionary throwbacks—primitive urges intent on cutting the tall world down to size. The sleazes he played in *L.A. Confidential* and *The Rainmaker* further the grand tradition of blackmail and hardball he established in *Ruthless People*, *Tin Men*, and *The War of the Roses*. The audience forgives his characters' excesses because DeVito himself always shows hustle. His eagerness snowballs, as has his ambition. An accomplished producer and director, DeVito doesn't sell himself short, on screen or off.

Photographed by Herb Ritts in Los Angeles on February 5, 1998.



The ORIGINAL

PAUL NEWMAN, actor.

Fifty-three films (including *Somebody Up There Likes Me* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*), produced 11, directed 5, co-wrote one (*Harry and Son*); nine Oscar nominations, one Oscar, for *The Color of Money*; five Golden Globes; philanthropist; racecar driver; salad-dressing king.

Paul Newman has maintained
a trim structural integrity and an athletic lope, looking as
silver-toned in his 70s as a once great quarterback.
Since he emerged from the Actors Studio and set his jaw toward
Hollywood, Newman has played antiheroes so self-collected
they aren't even antisocial—they just sidle their own way, like Eddie Felson
in *The Hustler*, Hud, Cool Hand Luke, and, most recently,
Sully in *Nobody's Fool*, matching wits (and grins) with Bruce Willis.
His 40-year marriage to Joanne Woodward (whom he
directed to an Oscar nomination in 1968's *Rachel, Rachel* and later in
The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds)
has lasted longer than most governments, he donates the profits from his
name-brand products to charity, and, a longtime activist,
he refused to desert liberalism when it was no longer chic.
The man hangs tough.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz in the Aspetuck River
(where he goes for a daily swim),
near his home in Westport, Connecticut,
on February 6, 1998.



Hollywood was utterly baffled by Luise Rainer, who became the first star ever to win the best-actress Oscar two years running, for *The Great Ziegfeld* (1936) and *The Good Earth* (1937), then fought bitterly with MGM chief Louis B. Mayer and left the studio forever. At 88, with her first film in more than 50 years due here soon, Rainer gives MARIE BRENNER the exclusive story of her youth in Europe as Hitler rose to power, her passionate, doomed marriage to playwright Clifford Odets, and her friendship with Albert Einstein



The Last Goddess

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ



ELBOW ROOM

Luise Rainer in the bedroom of her apartment on Eaton Square in London, January 15, 1998. "I never acted. I felt everything."

It was always said about Luise Rainer that she was thorny, skittish, and difficult to manage. At the height of her career, in 1938, she shared a luxurious cottage on the MGM lot with Metro's other screen goddesses—Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford, and Norma Shearer. She was "an echo of Europe," Anaïs Nin wrote of her, noting her ethereal nature and unpredictable ways. Seeing her for the first time at a dinner party in October 1940, Nin described her arrival in a "white floating dress." She wore no makeup and had a childlike impulsiveness, combined with "a sadness older than the world."

Rainer came to Hollywood from Vienna in 1935, and her movie career was incandescent and ephemeral. For her, the Hollywood years "are not even a fraction of the picture." Romance and passion have defined her long and supremely dramatic life. Rainer was a superstar, the first performer to win an Oscar for best actress two years in a row, for *The Great Ziegfeld* in 1936 and *The Good Earth* in 1937. And then, inexplicably, her days as a star were over, as if the Oscars had come with a curse. "I felt hunted," Rainer said recently in London of that time in her life. "I will never forget those years. . . . I was very unhappy."

After Rainer fled MGM, she encountered Anaïs Nin again. Watching Rainer dress, Nin was struck by how she rejected the "movie-star hats, the movie-star shoes, movie-star furs and bags" and reached instead for "the simplest beige dress," a delicate skullcap with a veil, and "the simplest shoes." In bed, Nin observed, Rainer slept with a blanket pulled over her head, as if she were a child frightened by a nightmare. Nin wrote in her diary what appeared to be the essence of Rainer's life. "Luise's image of herself and the image on the screen do not match. . . . She repudiated the worship, the flowers, the love letters addressed to her, as if the person on the screen were a fraud."

Mention *The Great Ziegfeld* to a movie buff and wait for the Luise Rainer imitation. The telephone scene has become a classic riff: Rainer is a quivering bundle of suppressed grief and feigned joy as the soubrette Anna Held, the abandoned wife of the theater impresario Florenz Ziegfeld, played by William Powell. She has just learned of her ex-husband's marriage.

> Ooh . . . Hello, Flo . . . I am so happy for you today. I could not help but to call on you and congratulate you . . . Wonderful, Flo, never better in my whole life! . . . Oh! It is so wonderful. I am so happy. Yes! And I am so happy for you too, yes? . . . It sounds funny for an ex-husband and ex-wife to tell each other how happy they are, *oui?*

She hangs up tremulously and, after a beat, collapses sobbing onto a chaise.

Rainer became celebrated for her intuitive acting and emotional range; she was a Method actress years ahead of her time. "I never acted," she said. "I felt everything." Like Meryl Streep, she seemed to have an aversion to anything artificial; her contrarian, bookish nature set her apart. Rainer was an anomaly in the studio system: she did her own hair and was often seen in white chinos and tennis shoes. "Let's show them that this is a world safe for poets!" she once scribbled on a napkin and gave to her husband-to-be, the playwright Clifford Odets.

As the peasant O-Lan in Sidney Franklin's *The Good Earth,* opposite Paul Muni, Rainer dies memorably, in another famous movie scene, relaxing her feeble grip on two pearls which she treasures. Once, during the filming, she was so overcome that she sat on a curb at Metro, weeping. "A big limousine comes by and stops—it was Joan Crawford," Rainer told me. "She said, 'Luise, what happened? Why are you ing?' I did not want to sound l phony about acting, so I told her I had received terrible news fron rope about my family." After R returned to her house in Brent that evening, a large bouquet of ers from Crawford arrived.

Rainer's disappearance from H wood was considered unfathomal neurotic quirk, perhaps, of a f dable talent. "My so-called career sky-high, but my private exist went down to hell," she told m

Late morning, Eaton Sc Luise Rainer lives i apartment in a Re building with a legacy ien Leigh here end of her life. O telephone, Rainer has precise, Germanic, bossy, takin measure. "You will arrive at 11 A is impossible to come anytime s Impossible!" When I ring the bel clear European voice calls throug intercom, "You are here! My to has arrived!" A tiny woman peek the door. She is all eyes, a Pie with a vamp's seductive come-o a strategist's cunning. She pull to her with both



"Clifford once said a terrible thing. He said, 'Darling, if ever you want to commit suicide, do it in my arms.'"



TRUST

iner with her first husband, right Clifford Odets, in the MGM ary; their tempestuous marriage m 1937 to 1940. *Insets, from* tainer photographed by George Hurrell ith Albert Einstein on a visit to , N.J., in 1938. "He was very normal," f the Nobel Prize winner. ed the violin and did not talk about y of Relativity."

hands. "Come in! Come in! You must have coffee. You must eat something!"

Rainer moves through her apartment like a ballet dancer, but with daunting speed. Her drawing room is fastidious and filled with antiques. "I hate disorder," she says. There is a portrait of the star as a young woman, dun sofas, and a large Ecuadorean religious retablo, which dominates the room. Rainer's posture is that of a girl, and she weighs what she did when she was at Metro, 90 pounds. She wears beige trousers, a matching cashmere sweater, and a silver choker. On the matter of her age, Rainer is succinct: "I am a freak of nature. I am 87! When you think how old I am! And I am proud of it!" She says, "I want to show you something. I have never had a face-lift! Look!" Her hands dart to her scalp; she flattens her hair. "No scars!"

She hides behind tartness; her conversation is punctuated with synthetic commands, theatrical gestures, and grand sighs. Her drawing room is her stage. "Darling, I have had so much love in my life! How will you be able to capture it all?" she asks me. The expressions on Rainer's face shift quickly; she is by turns excited, imperious, alluring. "My mother should walk around with the little man with the clapboard," says Francesca Bowyer, Rainer's 50-year-old daughter, who lives in Bel Air. The actress Anne Jackson says, "Every time I am out with Luise, it is like a three-act play by Euripides. Walking her dog can become the end of the world."

Rainer instructs me to follow her to her study and moves toward a wall of bookshelves. Her two Oscars gleam from a high shelf. She very obviously does not call my attention to them. "They mean nothing to me," she says coolly when I point them out. "It was expected that I do my best work. . . . Now, darling, *this* is what is important!" she says firmly, presenting me with a Penguin edition of interviews with history's luminaries—Trotsky, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Mark Twain. "It is a very difficult thing to do a proper interview." Of earlier stories about her, she says, "Darling love, all of these things are bullshit. And therefore I CONTINUED ON PAGE 394

"I am a freak of nature. I am 87! And I am proud of it!"



IDOL MOMENT

"Every time I am out with Luise, it is like a three-act play by Euripides," says actress Anne Jackson.





DOG DAY AFTERNOONS

"Dogs are generally not interested in Art," writes David Hockney. No, but his dachshunds, Stanley and Boodgie—seen here with their master in his L.A. studio—served as the inspiration and sole subjects for the work featured in his new book, *David Hockney's Dog Days*.



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD SCHMIDT © DAVID HOCKNEY

Spotlight

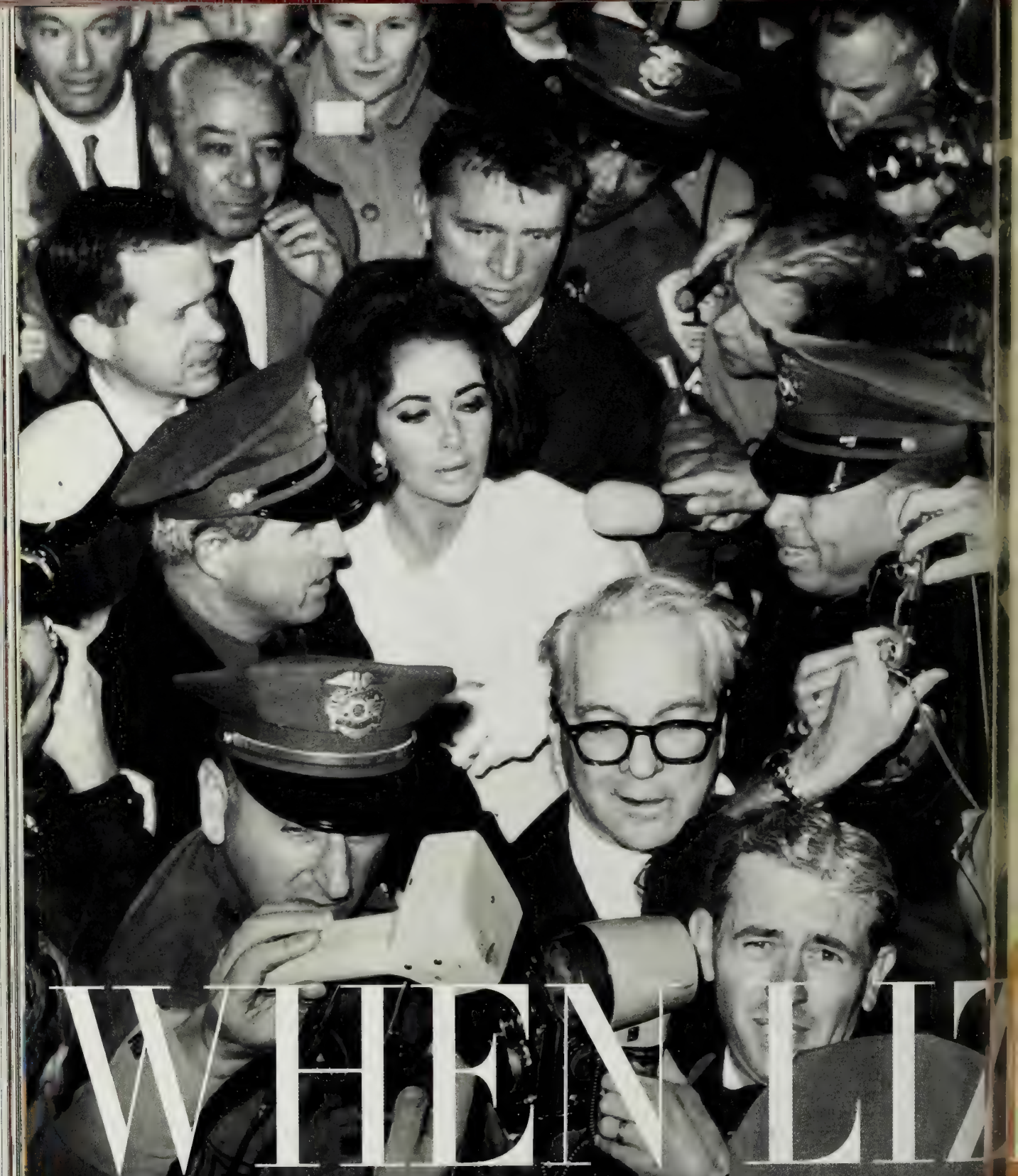
HOCKNEY'S HOUNDS

Unlike certain other Hollywood dogs, Stanley and Boodgie have neither agent nor publicist. But the two dachshunds have gotten themselves a starring vehicle anyway. Granted, there's a little nepotism going on: the pooches live with Hollywood's best-known painter, David Hockney, who has given them the leading roles—actually, the only roles—in his latest book, *David Hockney's Dog Days* (Bulfinch), to be published in April. In it, Hockney shows that Stanley and Boodgie have something much more elusive than a Hollywood deal. They have a quality that legends of old depended upon, namely *mystery*. One feels it in Clarence Sinclair Bull's photographs of Garbo, in Hurrell's pictures of Dietrich. And even though we're talking dogs, not divas, Hockney's subjects share the classic stars' noble profiles and silent knowing.

Stanley and Boodgie were usually cooperative. They thought nothing of lolling around and exposing their tummies, or dozing off during sittings. As the author jokingly points out, "Dogs are generally not interested in Art." Nevertheless, "being Hollywood dogs, they somehow seem to know that a picture is being made."

Hockney's hounds will engage even those who don't usually come running for "art." I think the spell of these works comes from Hockney's clarity of purpose and his ability to get to the essence of his subjects. These images have both ease and grace—especially the crayon drawings—which makes them pure heaven. Pictures of dogs and cats—whether professional or amateur—are can't-misses for a lot of people. Hockney, however, goes beyond the quotidian, taking us into these animals' very beings. He snoops right into the minds of these doggy dogs.

—INGRID SISCHY



WHEN LIZ

Forget *Titanic:* the most expensive movie ever made op
two directors, two separate casts, and two and a half yea
Cleopatra, Twentieth Century Fox's lavish, eyeball-pop
was eclipsed only by the international furor over the sca



ROMAN HOLIDAY
Opposite: **Elizabeth Taylor, trailed by Richard Burton, fights her way through the media crush at the Los Angeles International Airport.** *This page:* **Burton and Taylor, dressed as Antony and Cleopatra, photographed at sunset on the back lot of Cinecittà Studios in Rome, 1962.**

ET DICK

ars ago. It took $44 million (about $300 million today), nd-off filming in England, Italy, Egypt, and Spain to bring acle, to the screen. DAVID KAMP relives an epic folly that omance of its stars, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton

RIVOLI THEATER, NEW YORK CITY, JUNE 12, 1963

Back in the studio, Johnny Carson was in stitches. *The Tonight Show* had taken the unusual step of hooking up by live remote to the world premiere of *Cleopatra,* and the man he'd deputized to stand outside the Rivoli Theater in Times Square, Bert Parks, couldn't elicit a single upbeat comment from the film's director, Joseph L. Mankiewicz. "Congratulations, Mr. Mankiewicz!" said Parks, agleam with Brylcreem and headwaiter unction. "A wonderful, wonderful achievement!"

Mankiewicz, a stocky, impassive-looking man, had the mien of a Wall Street executive strong-armed into addressing his wife's garden club. "Well," he said warily, "you must know something I don't."

The studio audience roared with laughter. Carson's chuckling bled over the audio track. Parks persevered. "I want to ask you," he said conspiratorially, "whether you are *personally* going to control the sound on the showing of *Cleopatra* tonight? That's the rumor!"

"No," said Mankiewicz, "I think everything connected with *Cleopatra* is beyond my control at the moment."

The studio audience roared again. "Is some of the tension gone?" said Parks, changing tack. "Do you feel a little more at ease now?"

"No, I, uh . . . " Mankiewicz smiled thinly. "I feel as though the guillotine were about to drop."

With that ringing directorial endorsement, the four-hour epic *Cleopatra* unspooled before the public for the first time. It was a crack-up to Carson and company because poor Parks was evidently the only man in town willing to keep up appearances, to pretend that the world had trained its cameras on the *Cleopatra* premiere because it heralded the arrival of a spectacular new filmed entertainment in Todd-AO with color by DeLuxe. The truth was that everyone had come to see the train wreck. Everyone knew that *Cleopatra* was an extraordinarily botched production that had cost $44 million—an unheard-of sum for 1963 which was all the more astounding considering that Hollywood's previous all-time budget record setter, *Ben-Hur,* had only four years earlier cost a mere $15 million, chariot race and all. Everyone knew that *Cleopatra* had nearly gutted the studio that made it, Twentieth Century Fox. Everyone knew that it had taken two directors, two separate casts, two Fox regimes, and two and a half years of stop-start filmmaking in England, Italy, Egypt, and Spain to get the damned thing done.

Above all, everyone knew that *Cleopatra* had given the world "Liz and Dick," the adulterous pairing of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, irresistibly cast as Cleopatra and Mark Antony. Never before had celebrity scandal pushed so far into global consciousness, with Taylor-Burton pre-empting John Glenn's orbiting of the Earth on tabloid front pages, denunciations being sounded on the Senate floor, and even the Vatican newspaper publishing an "open letter" that excoriated Taylor for "erotic vagrancy." When she signed on for the role, Taylor had already been four times a bride, once a widow, and once a purported home wrecker, but it was during the making of *Cleopatra* that she truly transcended the label of mere "movie star" and became, once and for all, *Elizabeth Taylor,* the protagonist in a still-running extra-vocational melodrama of star-crossed romance, exquisite jewelry, and periodic emergency hospitalizations.

"It was probably the most chaotic time of my life. That hasn't changed," says Taylor, who has seldom discussed the *Cleopatra* experience publicly. "What with *le scandale,* the Vatican banning me, people making threats on my life, falling madly in love . . . It was fun and it was dark—oceans of tears, but some good times too."

For old Hollywood, *Cleopatra* represented the moment when the jig was up. No longer would anyone buy the studio system's sanitized, pre-packaged lives of the stars, nor would the stars and their agents bow in obeisance to aging moguls who'd founded the pl It was the moment when every schn on the street became an industry insi fluent in *Varietyese,* up to speed Liz's "deal" ($1 million against 10 cent of the gross), aware that a g film was *x* million dollars overbu and needed to earn back *y* mil dollars just to break even. *Heaven's G Ishtar, Waterworld*—the modern na tive of the "troubled production" gan here, though none of these f would come close to matching *Cle tra* for sheer anarchy, overreach, bad Karma. Here, too, originated mixed-blessing concept of "the n expensive movie ever made": in s economic terms, *Cleopatra* still h the title. Last year *Variety* estim *Cleopatra's* cost in 1997 dollars t $300 million, a full $100 million n than *Titanic's.* Even if you perfor straightforward consumer-price-ir conversion of the $44 million fig *Cleopatra's* adjusted-for-inflation bu comes out at $231 million.

Mankiewicz called *patra* "the toug three pictures I made," and his taph for the film— it was "conceive a state of emerge shot in confusion, and wound up blind panic"—is one of filmdom's famous quotes. Even now the mo survivors talk of its making almo if they're discussing a paranorma perience. "There was a certain madness to it all," says Hume Cro who played Sosigenes, Cleopatra's s arly adviser. "It wasn't anythin clear as 'Richard Burton is mo out on his wife, Elizabeth is le Eddie Fisher.' It was much more plicated, more levels than that. . . parazzi in the trees. . . . We were w behind. . . . Hanky-panky going c this corner and that. . . . There wheels within wheels within wh *God,* it was a messy situation."

Although it ended up turning a profit and winning modest critic claim, *Cleopatra* had grim aftereffec many of its principals. Mankiewicz v never again attain the brilliance prolificacy of his late-40s-to-lat peak, during which he pulled of still-unmatched feat of winning



THE FACE THAT LAUNCHED A THOUSAND CLIPS

Taylor, with tracheotomy scar visible, in her dressing room at Cinecittà, fall 1961. French hairdresser Alexandre flew in to style Taylor's hair for the shoot, and it took more than three hours to do her makeup.

Oscars in two years: for writing and directing *A Letter to Three Wives* (1949) and *All About Eve* (1950). "*Cleopatra* affected him the rest of his life," says his widow, Rosemary, who worked as his assistant on the film. "It made him more sensitive to the other blows that would come along." Mankiewicz would make only three more features, concluding with the minor gem *Sleuth* in 1972, and then spend his final 21 years disillusioned and idle, "finding reasons not to work," in the words of his son Tom.

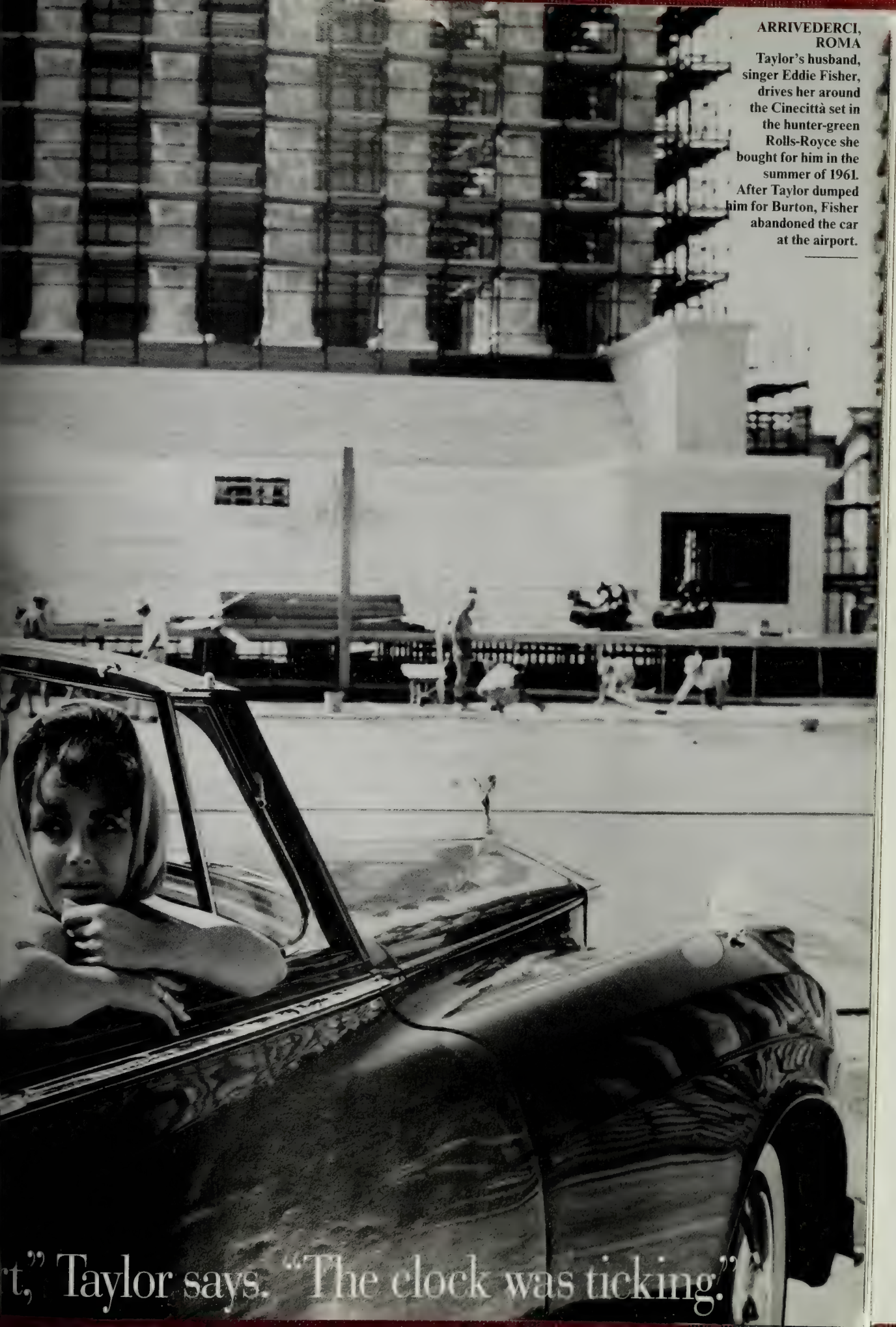
Taylor and Burton, in *Cleopatra*'s aftermath, would marry each other twice, make one good movie together, Mike Nichols's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?,* and otherwise fritter away their acting careers on a series of blowsy, drink-sodden exhibitions of international jet-set filmmaking: *The V.I.P.s, The Sandpiper, The Taming of the Shrew, Dr. Faustus, The Comedians, Boom!, Divorce His, Divorce Hers.*

As for the film's producer, the 68-year-old legend Walter Wanger, he would never make another movie. He had meant for *Cleopatra* to be a happy culmination of a distinguished career that had begun in 1921, when he persuaded Paramount to put Rudolph Valentino in *The Sheik.* Instead, he was forced on premiere night to sit queasily through a movie he hadn't seen, having been aced out of *Cleopatra*'s postproduction phase by Twentieth Century Fox president Darryl F. Zanuck, who targeted him as a prime suspect in the whole mess. And though the concept had been his in the first place, Wanger stood outside the ropes with the hoi polloi, watching as Mankiewicz, Zanuck, Rex Harrison (who played Julius Caesar), and Roddy McDowall (who played Octavian) made their entrances.

And where on this magical night at the Rivoli were the two people everyone wanted to see, Taylor and Burton? In England, where Burton was filming *Becket.* "We'd just had it with *Cleopatra* by then," says Taylor. "The whole thing. It was years of my life." A few weeks later, however, Taylor reluctantly hosted a London screening of the film. She dutifully sat through the picture, mortified by the memories it evoked and the butchery, as she per-



"Eddie and I had drifted



ARRIVEDERCI, ROMA
Taylor's husband, singer Eddie Fisher, drives her around the Cinecittà set in the hunter-green Rolls-Royce she bought for him in the summer of 1961. After Taylor dumped him for Burton, Fisher abandoned the car at the airport.

t," Taylor says. "The clock was ticking."

ceived it, of Mankiewicz's vision. Immediately afterward, she hurried back to the Dorchester Hotel, where she was staying—and threw up.

AN INAUSPICIOUS BEGINNING: NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, 1958–59

"He would never have pulled the plug on Cleopatra. *That would have been like giving up a child."*

—Stephanie Guest,
daughter of Walter Wanger

Everyone in the movie business loved Walter Wanger—he spoke well, was Dartmouth-educated, wore Savile Row suits, and was reliably couth and hail-fellow-well-met, the antithesis of the shouters who ran things.

Wanger had wanted to do a Cleopatra picture for years. There had been others—a 1917 silent version with Theda Bara; the opulent Cecil B. DeMille version of 1934, featuring Claudette Colbert; and, in 1946, a soporific British adaptation of George Bernard Shaw's play *Caesar and Cleopatra,* starring Claude Rains and Vivien Leigh. But Wanger hoped to surpass them all with an intelligent treatment and a star in the lead who was, in his words, "the quintessence of youthful femininity, of womanliness and strength." He found his ideal Queen of the Nile in 1951, when he saw Elizabeth Taylor in George Stevens's *A Place in the Sun.*

But that year Wanger was not in the best position to do a deal. After a couple of decades as one of Hollywood's more successful independent producers, responsible for such films as *Queen Christina,* with Greta Garbo, and John Ford's *Stagecoach,* he'd fallen upon a hitless period, the ignominy of which was compounded by the discovery that his wife, the actress Joan Bennett, was having an affair with her agent, Jennings Lang of MCA. On December 13, 1951, in an act that froze Hollywood in disbelief, Wanger staked out Bennett and Lang in the MCA parking lot, pulled out a pistol, and shot Lang in the groin. That Wanger got off as lightly as he did—serving only a four-month sentence at a Southern California "honor farm" in mid-1952—was in large part a testament to how well liked he was: Samuel Goldwyn, Harry and Jack Warner, Walt Disney, and Darryl Zanuck contributed to his legal fund.



BREAKING VOWS . . .
Left: a paparazzi shot of Taylor and Burton strolling through Portofino, Italy, during one of their romantic liaisons, July 1962.

By 1958, Wanger's comeback was in full swing (he had recently produced Don Siegel's thriller *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and Robert Wise's *I Want to Live!,* for which Susan Hayward would win the 1959 Academy Award for best ac
and his thoughts returned to his
project. On September 30 he to
first meeting about *Cleopatra* wit
ros Skouras, then the preside
Twentieth Century Fox. Skouras, a
haired contemporary of Wanger'
amenable, but he envisioned som
more modest than what Wanger
mind. During their meeting, Skour
a secretary excavate the ancient
for the soundless 1917 *Cleopatra*
duced by the Fox Film Corpo
Twentieth Century Fox's proge
and said, "All this needs is a
rewriting. Just give me this over
and we'll make a lot of money."

Fox was not a well-run operat
the late 50s. All the studios we
fering from the rise of televisio
the court-ordered dissolution of t
dio system, but Skouras and co
were having a particularly roug
of it—an internal report publis
1962 reported a four-year loss of
$61 million. "We were the onl
ple who could put John Wayne
Presley, and Marilyn Monroe in
and *not* have them do any bus
says Jack Brodsky, a Fox pu
during the *Cleopatra* years.

One reason for Fox's wea
gramming was the departure i
of its founder and resident
dynamo, chief of production Darr
uck, who, burned out after 23 y
the job, quit to become an indep
producer. Zanuck's replaceme
Buddy Adler, who had produce
Here to Eternity and *Love Is a*
Splendored Thing but proved t
ineffectual executive. As long as
had been in place, the New Yor
Skouras, a Greek immigrant
worked his way up from ownin
gle movie theater in St. Lou
kept his distance from Los
and the filmmaking process. Wit
however, Skouras felt no such
tions, and began to meddle he



DEALS . . .
Right: Joseph Mankiewicz directs the coronation scene. *Below:* Mankiewicz and producer Walter Wanger on the set at Torre Astura, Italy, in the spring of 1962.







. . . AND BUDGETS
Above: Darryl F. Zanuck shakes hands with Spyros Skouras, 1962. *Left:* costume designer Irene Sharaff adjusts Taylor's $6,500 "Isis" costume.

Skouras was no crea
nius, but he had m
important strategi
that temporarily
the industry from
sion—namely, he
off the wide-screer
making *The Robe,* a 1953 bibli
starring Richard Burton, with
dio's new CinemaScope technolo



...iz and Burton," Mankiewicz finally told Wanger, "are not just *playing* Antony and Cleopatra."

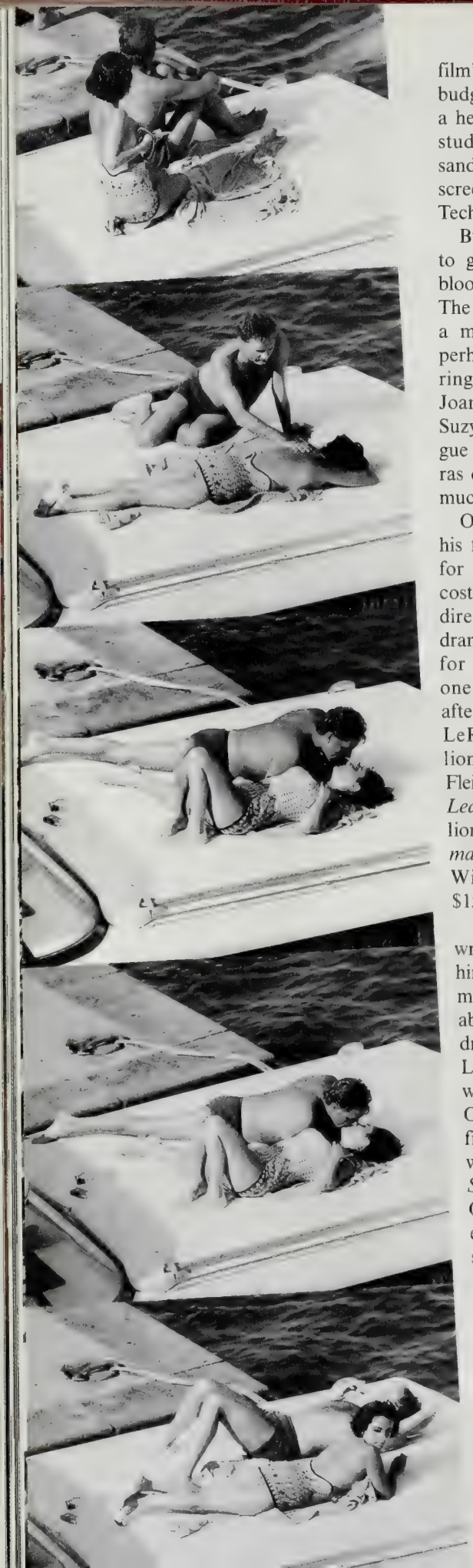
...ave his wife.
...a knife. Here,
...tells the queen
...leaving her and
...to Rom

"*Cleopatra*," Mankiewicz would later say, "was



ghest three pictures I ever made.





film's success ($17 million gross on a budget of $5 million) made Skouras a hero in Hollywood, and soon every studio was rushing out mastodonic sand-swept period epics in rival widescreen processes such as WarnerScope, TechniScope, and VistaVision.

But by the time Wanger was trying to get *Cleopatra* off the ground, the bloom of CinemaScope had withered. The budget-minded Adler envisioned a modest back-lot picture, costing perhaps a million dollars or two, starring a Fox contract player such as Joan Collins, Joanne Woodward, or Suzy Parker. Wanger continued to argue his case for Taylor, whom Skouras didn't want, because "she'll be too much trouble."

On June 19, 1959, Wanger received his first preliminary operating budget for *Cleopatra:* 64 days' shooting at a cost of $2,955,700, exclusive of cast and director salaries—expensive by melodrama standards, but a piddling amount for an epic. The decade had seen one record-setting mega-production after another, starting with Mervyn LeRoy's *Quo Vadis* (1951, $7 million) and continuing on with Richard Fleischer's Jules Verne fantasy, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954, $9 million), Cecil B. DeMille's *The Ten Commandments* (1956, $13 million), and William Wyler's *Ben-Hur* (1959, $15 million).

By late summer, a reputable British writer named Nigel Balchin had been hired to put together a script, a $5 million budget was deemed acceptable, and the names of Taylor, Audrey Hepburn, Sophia Loren, Gina Lollobrigida, and Susan Hayward were being discussed for the title role. On September 1, Wanger made his first formal overture to Taylor, who was in London filming *Suddenly Last Summer* with Joseph Mankiewicz. Over the telephone, she demanded—half-jokingly, she would later say—a million dollars, something no actress had ever been paid for one movie.

Finally, on October 15 Fox staged a photo opportunity at which Taylor pretended to sign her million-dollar contract. The wire services sent out the photo to newspapers across the country, and now Wanger's idea was the world's: Elizabeth Taylor as Cleopatra.

Getting Nowhere: New York, Angeles, London, 1959–60

"Gentlemen: You are wasting money Liz Taylor. Nobody wants to see her a the way she treated that sweet little De Reynolds. Everyone loves Debbie. Sh what the teenagers call a doll. *Gi Rogers is still popular, but Liz is not l anymore. I heard a group of teenagers ing about Liz. They said, 'She is a stin They're right."*

—Letter sent to Buddy Adler Walter Wanger by a woman in Beaum California, October 1

It is the wisdom of those consider themselves experts the subject that Mike T the producer-showman bel *Around the World in 80 D* was "the love of Elizabeth lor's life." But less than months after Todd died in a pl crash outside Albuquerque in M 1958—leaving the 26-year-old Ta alone with an infant daughter, I and the two sons she'd had with second husband, Michael Wilding- was seen stepping out with her husband's friend and protégé, E Fisher. Fisher, a pompadoured, hai 30-year-old pop idol, was famous his shrewdly publicized union with bie Reynolds; together they had children and were known as "Ar ca's sweethearts." But by the time lor and Fisher married in Las V in May of 1959, the public goo both had built up had evaporated, they were the target of constant m dudgeon and tabloid surveillance.

Skouras's intuition that Taylor w be "trouble" wasn't entirely unfou in that she had a predisposition to illness, and alarmed moralists. Then a she had soldiered on through *Cat Hot Tin Roof,* the film she was i midst of making when Todd die filled her obligation to *Butterfield* last film she owed to MGM unde contract there, and delivered a firs performance in *Suddenly Last Sum*

Reaching over Wanger's head, S ras tapped an old friend, Rouben moulian, to be *Cleopatra*'s director 61-year-old Mamoulian was a visualist, was accustomed to pol large groups of people, and ha rected the original Broadway pr tions of *Porgy and Bess, Oklahoma Carousel,* as well as the films *Dr. and Mr. Hyde, Becky Sharp,* anc *Stockings.* But CONTINUED ON PA

ite: the famous Marcello
rri shots of Taylor and Burton
g on their boat off Ischia,
June 1962. *Below:* paparazzi
the couple as they leave a
nightclub on April 19, 1962—
Taylor and Burton were
ying the affair. Burton
k; Taylor is still wearing
eopatra eyeliner.



"It's like fucking Khrushchev!" Burton said of Taylor. "I've had affairs before—how did I know the woman was so fucking famous?"



THAT'S A WRAP
By June 1962, the affair was already established by this close-up photograph Bert Stern took while the couple relaxed on their boat off the coast of Ischia. Still, it would be almost two years before they were free to marry.



"It was probably
the most chaotic time of my life,"
Taylor says. "It was fun
and it was dark—oceans of tears,
but there were some good
times, too."

Cleopatra

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 376 he had a reputation for being temperamental, and his filmmaking skills were rusty—apart from *Silk Stockings,* from 1957, he had made only one movie in the last 17 years. The screenwriter Nunnally Johnson (*The Grapes of Wrath*), whom Fox had hired to write additional dialogue for Balchin's screenplay, was skeptical. "I bet Walter Wanger that [Mamoulian] would never go to bat," Johnson wrote to his friend Groucho Marx. "All he wants to do is 'prepare.' A hell of a preparer. Tests, wardrobe, hair, toenails. . . . [But] if you make him start this picture, he will never forgive you to his dying day. This chap is a natural born martyr."

Late in 1959, the Fox hierarchy committed its first howler of a mistake: deciding, despite obvious meteorological evidence to the contrary, that England was an ideal place to shoot a sunbaked Egyptian-Roman epic. The decision was money-driven—the British government offered generous subsidies to foreign productions that employed a certain percentage of British crew.

Adler died of cancer the following July. His death created even more of a power vacuum at the studio, but the movie's chief detractor at Fox was out of the way. On July 28, 1960, Taylor finally signed a real contract. The film was to be shot not in CinemaScope but in Todd-AO, a rival wide-screen process developed by Mike Todd, which meant that Taylor, as Todd's beneficiary, would receive additional royalties. It was announced that Peter Finch would play Caesar and that Stephen Boyd, Charlton Heston's co-star in *Ben-Hur,* would play Antony. At the Pinewood Studios, located just outside London, John DeCuir, one of the best art directors in the business, began construction on a gorgeous, $600,000 Alexandria set covering 20 acres, featuring palm trees flown in from Los Angeles and four 52-foot-high sphinxes.

Right from the start, Mamoulian's *Cleopatra* was a farce. The first day of shooting, September 28, saw two work stoppages by the movie's British hairdressers, who took issue with the presence of Taylor's specially imported American stylist, Sidney Guilaroff. Only after several weeks of negotiation by Wanger was a fragile truce arranged—Guilaroff would style Taylor at her double penthouse suite in the Dorchester, but would not set foot in Pinewood.

Not that Taylor's presence at Pinewood ever became much of an issue. She called in sick on the third day of shooting, saying she had a cold. The cold grew into a lingering fever, and for the next few weeks she remained ensconced in her suite—attended by her husband and several doctors, including Lord Evans, Queen Elizabeth's physician.

Physically and spiritually, the Eddie Fishers were not a healthy couple at the time. Fisher missed the singing career he'd largely forsaken for Taylor, and knew the $150,000 he was being paid by Fox for vague junior-producer duties was really for being Taylor's professional minder. Furthermore, he was strung out on methamphetamine, having gotten hooked in his grueling touring days on "pep" shots administered by Max Jacobson, the notorious "Dr. Feelgood" who provided similar services to John F. Kennedy.

Taylor was in a continual funk because of her ill health, residual grief over the death of Mike Todd, the grim English weather, and the correct intuition that she'd lent her star power to a doomed, disorganized production. In response, she took to drinking and taking painkillers and sedatives. "She could take an enormous amount of drugs," Fisher told Brad Geagley, a senior producer at Walt Disney, in an unpublished 1991 interview for a never completed book concerning *Cleopatra.* "She's written up in medical journals somewhere—that's what she's always told me, and I believe her." (Fisher declined to be interviewed for this story, on the grounds that he wants to save his "explosive, blockbuster stuff" for a memoir he's working on.)

While Taylor spent the autumn shuttling between the Dorchester and the London Clinic, where she was variously diagnosed with a virus, an abscessed tooth, and a bacterial infection known as Malta fever, Mamoulian was having his own troubles. Balchin's script remained unsatisfactory to him, and in the rare moments when the sky was clear, the illusion of Egypt was nevertheless shattered by the steam visibly emanating from the actors' and horses' mouths.

Production ground to a halt on November 18, when there was simply no more Mamoulian could do without Taylor and an improved script. The plan was for shooting to resume in January, by which time Taylor would presumably be well and Nunnally Johnson would have finished another script polish.

Back in New York, Skouras sent a copy of the current shooting script to Joseph Mankiewicz, who had made his two Oscar-winning pictures for Fox, and asked the director for a frank cr
Mankiewicz was merciless: "Cleopa
written, is a strange, frustrating n
of an American soap-opera virgin
hysterical Slavic vamp of the type
mova used to play . . . "

On January 18, 1961, with prod
resumed but still moving at a
pace, Mamoulian, bitter and frus
cabled his resignation to Skouras.
behind about 10 minutes of footage
of it featuring Taylor, and a loss
million.

A Near-Death Experience: Lo
1960–61

*"I began to look at my life, and I
tough situation. In the hospital all the
mean, I became a* nurse. *I was giving
jections of Demerol. I didn't want the
to come. I felt sorry for the doctors.
for two nights, and* whooo-ee. . . . *A
nights I said, 'This is crazy.' I actuall
appendicitis to get away."*

—Eddie
recalling the winter of

A couple days after Skouras ac
Mamoulian's resignation, a de
voice broke through the static on
Cronyn's telephone in the Bah
where he owned a remote island
wife, Jessica Tandy. "Hume?"
voice. "Where the hell is Joe?"

It was Charles Feldman, Joe M
wicz's Hollywood agent. Mankiew
staying with the Cronyns, prepar
screenplay for *Justine,* his planned
up to *Suddenly Last Summer.* F
told Mankiewicz that Skouras wa
ing the moon for him to rescue *Cl*
The director was skeptical, but tha
stop him from flying immediately
York to meet Skouras for lunch
Colony.

"Spyros," he said, "why would
to make *Cleopatra*? I wouldn't e
see *Cleopatra.*"

Indeed, gifted as he was, Man
seemed the last person qualified
clined) to helm a big-budget sp
"His movies were dialogue-bas
staged like plays, like *All Abo*
where most of the action, where
action, is people coming down s
going in and out of doors," say
Mankiewicz, the director's old
who took time off from college
on *Cleopatra.* Skouras recognized,
er, that the elder Mankiewicz was
writer and skilled diva-wrangler,
finessed the egos of Taylor and K
Hepburn on *Suddenly Last Sumn*
Bette Davis on *All About Eve.*

Mankiewicz consented to tal

roject when Skouras made an offer
ouldn't refuse: Fox would not only
him on salary, but also pay $3 mil-
or Figaro, the production company
-owned with NBC. For a 51-year-
an whose glorious career had never
made him rich, the prospect of
ight millionairedom was irresistible.
was seduced by the opportunity,"
Chris Mankiewicz. "He never saw a
from *All About Eve*. Now, for once
life, they were all coming to him.
f a sudden you've got the 'Fuck
money."

opatra seemed, for a flicker of a
nt, to be in good, sane hands. Man-
cz, citing as his inspirations Shaw,
speare, and Plutarch, set about cre-
a totally new script for the movie.
listed two writers to help him, the
ist Lawrence Durrell (whose *Alex-
Quartet* was the basis for Man-
cz's *Justine* script) and the screen-
Sidney Buchman (*Mr. Smith Goes
shington*). Wanger, elated by Man-
cz's "modern, psychiatrically rooted
pt of the film," thought he was at
etting the upscale *Cleopatra* he'd
ied of.

as, this period of promise was when
aylor suffered what probably still
es as her nearest near-death experi-
Late in February she returned to
n from a vacation on the Continent
what her doctors described as "Asian
caught while rushing back to attend
r suddenly "appendicitis"-stricken
nd. By March, the Asian flu, or
ver it was, had complicated itself
ouble pneumonia, and Taylor was
d and prone in an oxygen tent in
orchester. On the night of March 4,
she fell comatose. She was rushed
gain to the London Clinic, Fisher
side screaming, "Let her alone! Let
one!," as paparazzi leaned in to get
graphs of her unconscious. The dili-
of the Fleet Street press ensured
ithin hours an international death-
was in place, some papers already
ng that Taylor was dead.
was pronounced dead four times,"
aylor. "Once I didn't breathe for
inutes, which must be a record."
rs performed an emergency tra-
my to alleviate congestion in her
ial passages. The operation saved
e, and by the end of the month
s back home with Fisher in Los
s, convalescing. Several months
he underwent plastic surgery to
l the incision mark at the base
throat, but it wasn't successful;





PALACE COUP

Above: the "Alexandrian Palace" set at Pinewood Studios, just outside London, 1960. *Left:* director Rouben Mamoulian discusses costumes and makeup with Taylor four months before he was replaced by Joseph Mankiewicz, 1960.

the scar is visible in the finished film.

Calamitous as the whole episode was, it produced two seemingly serendipitous effects. First, it bought Mankiewicz six months to get his *Cleopatra* together while Taylor recovered. Second, Taylor's public image was overnight transformed from home-wrecking pariah to heartstring-pulling survivor; the London Clinic received truckloads of flowers and sympathetic fan mail, even a get-well telegram from Debbie Reynolds. "I had the chance to read my own obituaries," says Taylor. "They were the best reviews I'd ever gotten." During her convalescence, she collected a sympathy best-actress Oscar for *Butterfield 8*, a movie she hated.

Mankiewicz decided to junk Mamoulian's footage and reconstruct the movie from scratch—only Taylor, Wanger, and John DeCuir, the art director, would carry over to the new incarnation of *Cleopatra*. To replace Finch and Boyd, Mankiewicz pursued Trevor Howard and Marlon Brando, the latter of whom had played Mark Antony in the director's 1953 adaptation of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. But neither actor was available, so Mankiewicz set his sights on Rex Harrison, whom he had directed in *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir*, and Richard Burton, then starring on Broadway in *Camelot*.

Skouras hated both choices. Harrison, he said, had never made a profitable movie for Fox, and Burton "doesn't mean a thing at the box office." Indeed, Burton, the 36-year-old product of a dirt-poor Welsh mining family, was perceived in Hollywood to be a great stage actor whose film career had never really taken off. But grudgingly, after strenuous lobbying from Mankiewicz, Skouras gave in. Fox bought out the remainder of Burton's *Camelot* contract for $50,000, signed the actor for $250,000, and got Harrison for $200,000.

If you had to peg one of *Cleopatra*'s two male stars as a potential troublemaker on the set, it would be Harrison; Wanger later expressed surprise that he had turned out to be "the good boy." Described by several of his surviving castmates as "the Cunt," Harrison was known for being tetchy, difficult, and condescending. Burton, by contrast, was a charmer, adored by his peers for his erudition, basso speaking voice, Welsh-barroom raconteurship, and sexual magnetism. Though notorious for his philandering—he had romanced such co-stars as Claire Bloom, Jean Simmons, and Susan Strasberg, and had shown up at his first meeting with Wanger, at New York's '21' Club, with a Copacabana dancer on his arm—he invariably returned to his wife, the dignified, mumsie-looking Sybil Burton.

One of the few people who remained

Cleopatra

oblivious to Burton's charms, in fact, was Elizabeth Taylor. She had met him years before *Cleopatra* at a party at Stewart Granger's house, back when she was a contract player at MGM. "He flirted like mad with me, with everyone, with any girl who was even remotely pretty," she says. "I just thought, 'Ohhh, boy—I'm not gonna become a notch on *his* belt.'"

"ENGLAND ALL OVER AGAIN": ROME, 1961

"It appears that the responsibility for increased costs in connection with the production falls into four categories, namely

(1) Elizabeth Taylor
(2) Lack of Planning
(3) Corruption on part of employees
(4) Friction between American and Italian Heads

No effort was made at this time to review the first category, due to the danger involved."

—Excerpt from a report prepared by Nathan Frankel, C.P.A., who was retained by Twentieth Century Fox in 1962 to determine how the studio's money was being spent on *Cleopatra*

The second go-round of *Cleopatra,* in Italy, was a folly of proportions nearly as epic as the finished film. Once again, the production rushed ahead without a completed script or adequate preparation, an indication of how desperately Skouras wanted to present Twentieth Century Fox's board of directors with a ready-to-release film that would bring in cash and save his regime. Wanger later estimated that if he and Mankiewicz had been given more time to regroup and plan, *Cleopatra* would have cost about $15 million. But Skouras was not exactly at his managerial best in 1961. Taylor, Fisher, and Mankiewicz got a sense of his addled state of mind one night when he joined them for drinks in New York. The others in the group couldn't help but notice that Skouras was addressing Taylor only as "Cleopatra."

"You don't know my name, do you?" Taylor said suspiciously. "You can't remember my name!"

"You are Cleopatra!" Skouras responded.

"You're paying me a million dollars," Taylor said, "and you can't remember my name. Spyros, tell me my name! I'll give you half the money back!"

"Ehh . . . ehh . . . ," Skouras sputtered, "you are Cleopatra!"

By the summer of 1961, *Cleopatra* was practically all Fox had left; short of funds, the studio had canceled most of its other features and had pinned much of its hope on television. The latest in Fox's series of regent studio chiefs was Peter Levathes, a Skouras protégé who had won good notices as the head of the company's television division.

"We decided to move the production to Rome because we thought Elizabeth Taylor would show up more," says Levathes. "The climate would be more to her liking, and she wouldn't call in sick all the time." At Levathes's urging, Skouras granted Fisher's request to fly in Taylor's personal physician, Rex Kennamer of Beverly Hills, for a fee of $25,000.

Interiors and Roman exteriors were now to be shot at Cinecittà, the massive studio complex six miles outside of central Rome. Ancient Alexandria was being reconstructed at Torre Astura, a hunting estate on the Tyrrhenian Sea owned by Prince Stefano Borghese. Some additional work, mostly battle sequences, would be filmed in the Egyptian desert.

Trawling through the voluminous files and correspondence left in *Cleopatra*'s wake, what one takes away is the abject terror Taylor inspired in powerful men. (As Fisher would later say, "One thing I learned from Elizabeth—if you ever need anything, yell and scream for it.") Privately, Wanger, Mankiewicz, Skouras, and Levathes complained about her fragility and erratic work habits, and talked about how she deserved a good telling-off. But in her presence they lost their resolve and genuflected. Skouras and Levathes tried (unsuccessfully) in 1961 to sign her to a four-picture deal with Fox. Wanger set her up in a 14-room mansion in Rome called the Villa Papa, and flew in chili from Chasen's for her. Mankiewicz reportedly shuffled shooting schedules to accommodate her menstrual cycle. "We could only shoot Roman scenes in the Senate [which did not involve Taylor] when Elizabeth was having her period," says Kenneth Haigh, who played Brutus. "She said, 'Look, if I'm playing the most beautiful woman in the world, I want to look my best.'"

But by the time the production had moved to Rome, these men had an even better reason to coddle Taylor than the usual keep-the-talent-happy ethos. Taylor, in the wake of her near-death episode, was now uninsurable. If she walked off or fell ill, the movie—which *was* Elizabeth Taylor—would represent nothing but red ink.

Mankiewicz, between scouting locations, assembling a cast, and consu
with department heads, wasn't clo
having a finished screenplay
shooting began on September 2
mere 132 pages out of an eventual
or most of the film's first half ("C
and Cleopatra") and none of its se
half ("Antony and Cleopatra").
meant that the film would be sh
continuity, a costly process that w
eventually result in 96 hours of
Todd-AO negative.

Skouras insisted on moving a
anyway, arguing that "the girl i
salary"—an allusion to Taylor's rene
ated contract, which called for h
work for 16 weeks beginning Aug
with a guarantee of $50,000 for
week *Cleopatra* ran over. Conseque
Mankiewicz would spend the rema
of the production directing by day
writing by night, an impossibly t
task that, says his widow, "damn
killed him." (Yet another screenw
Ranald MacDougall [*Mildred Pi*
was drafted in, but Mankiewicz sti
sisted on writing the actual sho
script.)

Casting was done on the fly: a
September flurry of telephone
brought aboard such actors as H
Cronyn, Martin Landau, and C
O'Connor from America and Ke
Haigh, Robert Stephens, and Mi
Hordern from England. But whe
actors arrived in Rome, they disco
half-finished sets, incomplete wardr
and an exhausted writer-director
hadn't yet written their parts.
Cronyn, "I arrived the same day as
ton, September 19, 1961. Neither o
us worked until after Christmas."

"I had a 15-week contract, whic
long for those days, but it wound
ing almost 10 months," says O'Co
who played Casca, a Roman senato
puts the first knife into Caesar's bac
all that time, I worked 17 days."

The chop-chop pace demanded by
ras resulted in all manner of
dropping blunders that might have
circumvented had there been ade
time to prepare. The beach at Tor
tura, where DeCuir's massive repl
Alexandria was under constru
turned out to be laced with live
left over from World War II; a $2
"mine-dredging" expenditure was
to *Cleopatra*'s ledger. On top of th
set was adjacent to a NATO firing
Wrote Wanger in his diary, "W
have to arrange our schedule so
not working when the big guns are

nd because Italy had no facilities cessing Todd-AO film, the day's ıad to be sent all the way to Hol- and then back to Rome before ctor could view them.

ıir's sets were grandiose and beau- ıt because no one had kept close his work, Mankiewicz and his scovered too late that they were unmanageably big. The fake Ro- ɔrum (which cost $1.5 million to lwarfed the real one up the road; ı steel tubing was required to hold ıt *Cleopatra* exacerbated a country- ortage, palpably affecting the Ital- struction business.

DeCuir's Rome grew, Twentieth y Fox began to shrink. Earlier in r, Skouras, desperate to stanch ıorrhaging of the company's re- , had engineered the sale of the 260-acre Los Angeles lot to the um Company of America for llion, a transaction that would o resemble Peter Minuit's $24 r Manhattan. Though the studio ed to lease 75 acres for its own entually reacquired), the remain- eage was now being developed ntury City, the gigantic office- -and-shopping-center complex that south of Beverly Hills today. ould see the village from *The Bernadette,* New York, castles, a lroad station," recalled Cesare , a Fox contract player who por- Apollodorus, Cleopatra's major- "And the first thing that I saw turning to the lot in 1962] was a ɔm the Acme Wrecking Compa- ything was coming down. This ıotent sign for me—that the end ıe to an entire world."

heer size and obvious disorgani- ɔn of *Cleopatra* made it an easy r anyone practiced in the art of circumstance not lost on many alians hired to work on the pic- he Italians are wonderful at de- hings, but they have this natur- ivity for larceny," says Tom vicz, the director's younger son, e his brother, Chris, took time college to work on the film. ɔu start saying, 'All right, I need torian-guard outfits, I need 600 slave outfits, I need 10,000 sol- its'—this is like an *invitation.* e was no one to stay on top of you wanted to buy some new re or a set of glasses for your was the easiest thing to put it dget of *Cleopatra.*"

"Later I got to see the studio's breakdown on the money waste," says Taylor. "They had $3 million for 'miscellaneous,' and $100,000 for paper cups. They said I ate 12 chickens and 40 pounds of bacon every day for breakfast. *What?*"

Skouras, though the man with ultimate authority, placed a lot of the blame for the film's rampant disorganization on Wanger. "You have to know Walter Wanger well," Skouras later told an interviewer. "He is a fine man, but he likes to have lots of people to help him. Off the record, he does not want to work so hard." Levathes felt that Mankiewicz was a prima donna whose extravagant requests were being indulged by Skouras regardless of financial consequence. Wanger complained with some justification that Skouras and Levathes were undermining his authority by circumventing him in favor of Mankiewicz and the department heads, but too often he merely complained. The surviving actors and crew remember the producer eventually devolving into a sweet but powerless "greeter" whose most visible duty was to escort visiting European royals to the set.

As a bout of torrential, London-like weather precluded outdoor shooting for much of the fall of '61 (at a cost of $40,000 to $75,000 for every day rained out), many of the film's principal actors realized that they were going to be in Rome at least through the spring of '62. So they moved out of the luxurious Grand Hotel and into their own apartments, becoming idle, semi-permanent residents of the city. Given that Fox had to keep the actors on salary the whole time—Hume Cronyn at $5,000 a week, Roddy McDowall at $2,500 a week, Martin Landau at $850 a week, etc.—the cost pileups were tremendous.

At one point in autumn, Skouras and Levathes approached Burton to see if he'd mind terribly if the movie ended with Caesar's assassination, thereby cutting out half of the plot and roughly 95 percent of Antony's part. Burton was succinct. "I'll sue you until you're puce," he told them.

Given the messy state of affairs, morale remained remarkably high on the set. "Everyone was in a very gay way," says O'Connor. "We knew the picture was going to be O.K., even if it wasn't going to be one of the greats." The rushes were impressive enough to prompt hope in some quarters that the film *was* en route to greatness. On Christmas Eve, Fox publicist Jack Brodsky wrote the following to Nathan Weiss, his colleague in New York: "The first 50 pages of the second act have just come from Mank's pen and they're fabulous. Burton and Taylor will set off sparks, and already Fisher is jealous of the lines Burton has."

HELL BREAKS LOOSE: ROME, WINTER 1962

"For the past several days uncontrolled rumors have been growing about Elizabeth and myself. Statements attributed to me have been distorted out of proportion, and a series of coincidences has lent plausibility to a situation which has become damaging to Elizabeth . . . "

—Statement issued by
Richard Burton, then disavowed
by him, on February 19, 1962

Le scandale, as Taylor and Burton later termed their affair, didn't begin until their work together did, in December or January, after Mankiewicz had written enough material for them to start rehearsing the film's second half. "For the first scene, there was no dialogue—we had to just look at each other," says Taylor. "And that was it—I was another notch." Burton further endeared himself to Taylor by showing up hung over. She had feared that he would lord his talent over her and make fun of her lack of theatrical training; instead, she found herself steadying his trembling hands as he lifted a coffee cup to his lips. "He was probably putting it on," Taylor says. "He knew it would get me."

As for Eddie Fisher, he had not been having the best of times in Rome. Though he was on the *Cleopatra* payroll and was trying to learn how to become a movie producer, his presence wasn't expected or needed at Cinecittà. "I remember Eddie one day walking onto the set, trying to be funny, and shouting to Mankiewicz, 'O.K., Joe, let's make this one!' " says Brodsky. "No one reacted. It cast a pall."

"Eddie and I had drifted *way* apart," says Taylor. "It was only a matter of time for us. The clock was ticking."

But right through the end of January, the only suspicion that Fisher held was that Burton was encouraging his wife to drink too much. In his self-described capacity as a nurse, Fisher took exception to the influence the Welshman's prodigious boozing and peaty *joie de vivre* were having on Taylor, who had grown tired of her husband's predilection for dining in. "Remember," says someone who worked on the production, "Elizabeth was a very self-indulgent person at that time, a sensualist who'd just been

confronted with possible death, and was probably rebounding from it by tasting as much life as possible."

Several people associated with *Cleopatra* point out that sensualism and high living were the order of the day in Rome, particularly with so little work for the actors to do. "There was a tremendous sense of being in the right place at the right time," says Jean Marsh, who played Antony's Roman wife, Octavia, well before her PBS fame as the creator and star of *Upstairs, Downstairs.* "Fellini was there, and Italy was the capital of film. And the film was so extravagant, so louche, it affected everyone's lives. It was a hotbed of romance—Richard and Elizabeth weren't the only people who had an affair."

Taylor and Burton filmed their first scene together on January 22. Wanger happily noted in his diary, "There comes a time during the making of a movie when the actors become the characters they play. . . . That happened today. . . . It was quiet, and you could almost feel the electricity between Liz and Burton."

Some people on the set, including Mankiewicz, knew already that there was more going on than just electricity. At one point Burton had stridden triumphantly into the men's makeup trailer and announced to those present, "Gentlemen, I've just fucked Elizabeth Taylor in the back of my Cadillac!" Whether or not this boast was for real, it *was* true that he and Taylor were using the apartment of her secretary, Dick Hanley, for trysts.

On January 26, Mankiewicz summoned Wanger to his room at the Grand Hotel. "I have been sitting on a volcano all alone for too long, and I want to give you some facts you ought to know," he said. "Liz and Burton are not just *playing* Antony and Cleopatra."

"Confidentially," Wanger later told Joe Hyams, his collaborator on *My Life with Cleopatra,* a rush-job account of the film's travails published in 1963, "we all figured it might just be a once-over-lightly. That is what Mr. Burton figured, too. I know it. He told me."

Several firsthand accounts support the idea that Burton began his dalliance with Taylor with only short-term pleasure in mind. Brodsky recalls the actor's genuine surprise, as the weeks advanced, to find himself in the midst of both an intense affair and an international incident: "He said to me, 'It's like fucking Khrushchev! I've had affairs before—how did I know the woman was so fucking famous!' "

Mankiewicz and Wanger harbored hopes in the early going that the situation would simply blow over. But Taylor's notoriety since her grieving-widow days had made her the most-hunted tabloid prey in the world. Well before the affair had begun, the Roman gutter press had planted informants in Cinecittà and arranged paparazzi stakeouts of the Villa Papa. Word got out fast, even before Fisher knew anything was going on.

As February dawned, rumors were swirling so madly around Rome—"the whispering gallery of Europe," as Wanger called it—that Fisher could no longer ignore or brush off the gossip. One night early that month, as he lay in bed beside Taylor, he received a heads-up telephone call from Bob Abrams, his old army buddy and Jilly Rizzo–like amanuensis.

Fisher hung up the phone and turned to his wife. "Is it true that something is going on between you and Burton?" he asked her.

"Yes," she said softly.

Quietly, defeatedly, Fisher packed and spent the night at Abrams's place. The following day, he returned to the Villa Papa, and for about two weeks slept by Taylor's side, hoping that the situation would somehow resolve itself. There was never any kind of knock-down-drag-out confrontation. "She just wasn't 'there' anymore," Fisher said in 1991. "She was with *him.* And I wasn't 'there.' She talked to him once at the studio, in my office, with all kinds of people around. And she was talking love to him on the telephone. 'Oh, dahling, are you all right?' With this new British accent."

By mid-February the rumors had gone worldwide, and Taylor-Burton innuendo was everywhere. *The Perry Como Show* ran a comic "Cleopatra" sketch in which a slave named Eddie kept getting in Mark Antony's way. Taylor was visibly upset, and the entire production was in a bad way. Mankiewicz, run-down from his Sisyphean work schedule, had become feverishly ill. So had Martin Landau, who had a large part (as Rufio), and whose illness necessitated the cancellation of a day's worth of shooting. Leon Shamroy, the cinematographer, a cigar-chomping sexagenarian known for his seen-it-all stoicism (he had shot the Fox epics *The Robe, The Egyptian,* and *The King and I,* as well as the Gene Tierney classic *Leave Her to Heaven*), collapsed from exhaustion. Forrest "Johnny" Johnston, the film's production manager, fell gravely ill and died in Los Angeles in May.

Morale back home was also low ro and anti-Skouras factions were ing shape on the Fox board, and r or swirled of a coming putsch. "Thi va where my hair went gray," says Lev es who is now 86. "I used to look you r

Burton, contrite, met with Wang n volunteered to quit the production na was what was best. Wanger cou le against this option, arguing that na would solve the problem [is] putti ar end to any basis for the rumors."

In the meantime, Burton's older th er Ifor, a powerfully built man who nc tioned as the actor's bodyguard-fac m used his fists to get the message a ss "Ifor beat the living shit out of Bu n says a *Cleopatra* crew member. "Fo ha he was doing to Sybil. Beat him s that Richard couldn't work the ne ay He had a black eye and a cut cheek

Both Fisher and Sybil Burton id ed it best to flee the situatic H headed by car for Gstaad, whe h and Taylor owned a chalet; she le fo New York. But before either had ne Fisher paid a visit to the Burtons ll for a heart-to-heart talk with Sy said, 'You know, they're cont m their affair,' " Fisher recalled. "A sh said, 'He's had these affairs, and al ways comes home to me.' And tid 'But they're still having their a ir And she went to the studio, an ne closed [production] down. An ha cost them $100,000. And the day let Rome, it cost them another $10 00 Elizabeth screamed and carried on or stopped that day. They had that in no of me."

When Fisher, having driven as a Florence, called Rome to determ hi wife's whereabouts, he discovere ha Taylor was in Hanley's apartme ac companied by Burton, who was e ge that the singer had meddled in h nar riage to Sybil. Burton took the tele ne "You nothing, you spleen," he s to Fisher. "I'm going to come up the an kill you."

Instead, Burton summoned the c ag to tell Taylor their affair was ov an left for a short trip to Paris, where wa playing a small part in Darryl Z ck Normandy epic, *The Longest Da* Tha night, Hanley called Wanger to s tha Taylor would be unable to work t nex day. "She's hysterical," Wanger w his diary. "Total rejection came ne than expected."

The following day, February Tay

eopatra

as rushed to the Salvator Mundi ital. The official explanation was poisoning. Wanger, who cooked up y about some bad beef she had eat- had, in fact, discovered Taylor ed on her bed in the Villa Papa, y from an overdose of Seconal, a ription sedative. "It wasn't a sui- ttempt," says Taylor. "I'm not that of person, and Richard despised ness. It was more hysteria. I needed est, I was hysterical, and I needed t away."

ylor recovered quickly, but news of ospitalization compelled both Fish- nd Burton to fly back to Rome, only fanned the flames of rumor. ebruary 19, Burton, eager to extin- these flames, issued a statement ssing the "uncontrolled rumors . . . t Elizabeth and myself." The state- took pains to provide reasons why and Eddie had left town (she was ng Burton's sick foster father; he usiness matters to attend to), but outright denied that an affair was on. It was a crucially unsavvy non- l denial, and the Fox publicity team poplectic. The studio got Burton to ow the statement and pin the blame s release on his press agent, but it oo late: now the papers had a peg which they could hang their "af- stories. Taylor-Burton was an out- -open phenomenon.

was not a help to the production," crew member. "You know how she me off for her period? Now she was g three or four periods a month."

VHIRLWIND: ROME, SPRING 1962

true—Elizabeth Taylor has fallen in love with Richard Burton. It's the the road for Liz and Eddie Fisher."

Louella Parsons's syndicated column, March 10, 1962

e report is ridiculous."

—Eddie Fisher's response, March 10

e aftermath of Taylor's hospitaliza- , all the aggrieved parties tried to ange themselves as they had been e. Fisher threw his wife a 30th- ay party on February 27 and pre- her with a $10,000 diamond ring n emerald-studded Bulgari mirror. n told the press he had no intention rcing Sybil. But it was to no avail— ylor-Burton affair continued, as did porters' pursuit.

ately, there were cruel scenes be- tween Burton and Fisher, with the former visiting Villa Papa and boasting to the latter, "You don't know how to use her!," or turning to Taylor and saying, with Fisher present, "Who do you love? Who do you love?" Fisher never fought back. Where others saw wimpiness and retreat, Wanger, in recorded conversations with Joe Hyams, his book collaborator, ascribed a kind of nobility to the singer's pacifism. "Eddie always took the position that this is an evil man, and he had to stand and protect her when she was misled by this terrible guy," he said. "He wanted to hold his family together." Fisher left Rome for good on March 21, 1962.

Cleopatra was now about halfway finished, but it still lacked its biggest, most challenging scenes: Cleopatra's procession into Rome, the arrival of her barge at Tarsus, the battles of Pharsalia, Philippi, Moongate, and Actium. Moreover, there remained several weeks' worth of "Antony and Cleopatra" scenes to be filmed. The fictive and the personal dovetailed to the point where even the actors got confused. "I feel as if I'm intruding," Mankiewicz said one day as his shouts of "Cut!" went unabided by Taylor and Burton during a love scene. In a less pleasant coincidence, the very day that Burton announced to the press he would never leave Sybil was the day Taylor had to film the scene in which Cleopatra discovers that Antony has returned to Rome and taken another wife, Octavia. The screenplay called for Cleopatra to enter Antony's deserted chambers in Alexandria, pick up his dagger, and stab his bed and belongings in a rage. Taylor went at it with such gusto that she banged her hand and needed to go to the hospital for X-rays. She was unable to work the next day.

The day-to-day developments of Taylor-Burton were now a full-time news beat. Martin Landau remembers a night shoot on the island of Ischia involving Taylor and Burton where the crew's spotlights, once turned on, revealed paparazzi bunched up like moths. "Behind us was this cliff, with shrubbery and growth coming out of it," he says, "and there were 20 photographers hanging off these things, with long lenses. A couple of them fell—30 feet!"

In actuality, the affair was, as Taylor would note a few years after the fact, "more off than on." "We did try and resist," she says today. "My marriage with Eddie was over, but we didn't want to do anything to hurt Sybil. She was—is—such a lovely lady." Taylor still won't discuss the scenes and machinations that went on between the Fishers and the Burtons, calling the subject matter "too personal," but other observers on the set remember moments when the lovers' similarly combustible personalities caused near explosions. In the midst of *le scandale,* Burton was also carrying on with the Copacabana dancer he'd been seeing in his *Camelot* days; one day Taylor took exception to her presence on the set, prompting Burton to shove Taylor slightly and snarl, "Don't get my Welsh temper up." In another instance, Burton showed up for work wrecked, again with the "Copa cutie," as she was known on the set, in tow. When he finally rallied himself into performing condition, Taylor admonished him, "You kept us all waiting." To which Burton responded, "It's about time somebody kept you waiting. It's a real switch."

Far more so than Taylor, Burton was flummoxed, unable to choose between his wife and lover, desperate to have it both ways. Speaking to Kenneth Tynan in *Playboy* after *Cleopatra* had wrapped, he futilely tried to defend the Liz-Sybil arrangement with a choice bit of baroque doggerel. "What I have done," he said, "is to move outside the accepted idea of monogamy without investing the other person with anything that makes me feel guilty. So that I remain inviolate, untouched."

For all its unpleasant side effects, Burton was elated by his new worldwide fame. Kenneth Haigh remembers him "calling me into his room and saying, 'Look at this! There are about 300 scripts! The offers are piling up everywhere!'" Hugh French, Burton's Hollywood agent, began boasting that his client now commanded $500,000 per picture. "Maybe I should give Elizabeth Taylor 10 percent," said Burton.

Alas, the seesaw nature of the affair was not conducive to the efficient completion of what was now routinely described in the papers as a "$20 million picture." Between his euphoric highs, Burton was drinking heavily on the set. Taylor, too, became erratic, alternately showing up unprecedentedly early to work on scenes with Burton and failing to show up at all. A production document titled "Elizabeth Taylor Diary" indicates that on March 21, the day Fisher departed, Taylor was dismissed from Cinecittà at 12:25 P.M. after "having great difficulty delivering dialogue."

The unexpected work stoppages didn't always bother Mankiewicz, who wel-

comed the opportunity to catch up on his writing and his sleep. He was by now a physical ruin, sometimes writing scenes the night before they were to be shot. A stress-related dermatological disorder caused the skin on his hands to crack open, forcing him to wear thin white film cutter's gloves as he wrote the script longhand. Somehow, he retained his equanimity and sense of humor. When an Italian newspaper alleged that Burton was a "shuffle-footed idiot" deployed by the director to cover up the real scandal—that it was Mankiewicz who was having an affair with Taylor—Mankiewicz released a statement declaring, "The real story is that I'm in love with Richard Burton, and Elizabeth Taylor is the cover-up for us." (The same day, Burton shuffled up to Mankiewicz on the set and said, "Duh, Mister Mankeawitz, sir, do I have to sleep with her again tonight?")

Astonishingly, there had been a time, early on in Rome, when the Fox brass had chastised their publicity department for not getting *Cleopatra* enough attention. By April and May of 1962, as *le scandale* superseded news coverage of the Mercury-Atlas space missions and the U.S.-Soviet tensions that were leading up to the Cuban missile crisis, it was almost impossible to keep up with the whirlwind. Fisher was briefly hospitalized in New York with exhaustion, and after his release took to opening his nightclub act with the song "Arrivederci, Roma." A congresswoman from Georgia named Iris Blitch called on the attorney general to block Taylor and Burton from re-entering the country, "on grounds of undesirability." And in April, the Vatican City weekly, *L'Osservatore della Domenica,* printed a 500-word "open letter," signed only "X.Y.," that began "Dear Madam" and went on to say, "Even considering the [husband] that was finished by a natural solution, there remain three husbands buried with no other motive than a greater love that killed the one before. But if we start using these standards and this sort of competition between the first, second, third, and the hundredth love, where are we all going to end up? Right where you will finish—in an erotic vagrancy . . . without end or without a safe port."

The complicity of the Catholic Church in the sport of Liz-bashing undid Taylor's nerves at the worst possible moment for the production. She was due at last to film Cleopatra's entrance into Rome, the centerpiece of the entire picture. The premise of the sequence, commonly known as the procession, is that Cleopatra, having borne a son to Caesar in Egypt, must now go to her lover's home turf to present herself to the Roman public. If they accept her, then her dream of a globe-straddling Egyptian-Roman empire is realized; if they boo and hiss, she is finished. Mankiewicz, hewing to Plutarch, addressed the situation precisely as Cleopatra did: by devising the most lavish, eyeball-popping spectacle he could think of, a NASA-budgeted halftime show.

As Caesar and the senators watched, agog, from the Forum's reviewing stand, a seemingly endless parade of exotica would stream through the Arch of Titus: fanfaring trumpeters, charioteers, scantily clad dancing girls with streamers, an old hag who changes magically into a young girl, dwarfs tossing sweets from atop painted donkeys, comely young women tossing gold coins from atop painted elephants, painted Watusi warriors, dancers shooting plumes of colored smoke into the air, a pyramid that bursts open to release thousands of doves, Arabian horses, and, for the finale, a two-ton, three-story-high, black sphinx drawn by 300 Nubian slaves, upon which would sit Cleopatra and her boy, Caesarion, both resplendent in gold raiment.

Originally the procession was to have been one of the first things shot, in October, but bad weather and inadequate preparation made a hash of that plan, forcing Fox to pay out money to various dancers, acrobats, and circus-animal trainers to ensure their availability through the spring. (Furthermore, the original elephants that had been hired proved to be unruly and destructive, one of them running amok on the Cinecittà soundstages and pulling up stakes; the elephants' owner, Ennio Togni, later attempted to sue Fox for slander when word got out that his pachyderms had been "fired." Said a disbelieving Skouras, "How do you slander an elephant?")

Six thousand extras had been hired to cheer the queen's entrance and ad-lib reactions of "Cleopatra! Cleopatra!," but Taylor, mindful of their Roman Catholicism and the Vatican's recent condemnation, feared an impromptu stoning. Comforted by Burton and Mankiewicz, she summoned the courage to be hoisted atop the sphinx. When the cameras started rolling, she assumed a facial expression of blank hauteur and felt the sphinx rolling through the arch. "Oh my God," thought, "here it comes."

But the Roman extras neither bo nor (for the most part) shouted "Cle tra! Cleopatra!" Instead, they cheered yelled, "Leez! Leez! *Baci! Baci!,*" v blowing kisses her way.

OPERATION HOMESTRETCH: ROME, Isc EGYPT, SPRING-SUMMER 1962

"Mr. Skouras faces the future with age, determination . . . and terror."

—Groucho Marx, speaking testimonial dinner held in honor of Sp Skouras at the Waldorf-As in New York, April 12,

In the spring of '62, Skouras saw writing on the wall. He knew tha reign as Fox president wasn't goin last much longer. By May he was st en with prostate trouble, and wher arrived in Rome on May 8 to scre five-hour rough cut of *Cleopatra*-to-c he had been fitted with a tempo catheter and was heavily sedated— fell asleep several times during the sc ing. Satisfied nevertheless with wha saw, he began a push to finish the as quickly as possible.

The month had begun with Taylo disposed on account of what Wange scribed as "the most serious situatio date." On April 21, Taylor and Bur without forewarning any members o production, left Rome to spend the h er weekend at Porto Santo Stefan coastal resort town a hundred mile the north. Unprotected by handlers publicists, they were surveilled the e time by a swarm of reporters and parazzi, and the following day new pers around the world ran pictorial ries of their "tryst at seaside."

"It was like hell," says Taylor. "T was no place to hide, not in this tiny tage we had rented. When we were ing somewhere, they ran us into a by jumping in front of the car. It w ther Richard hits them or he swe over, so we swerved over."

One of the Porto Santo Stefano "t stories appeared in the London *T* which infuriated Sybil Burton, who at home in England with the Bur two small daughters, Kate and Je Sybil had studiously ignored the Lo tabloids, but to have the Taylor-Bu affair splashed across the *Times* wa last straw. She went to Rome on Ap to await her husband's return. Wa fearing a public scene, detained her Grand Hotel for as long as he could

In the meantime, Taylor retu abruptly and solo from Porto Santo

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fano, and was rushed, for the second time in four months, to the Salvator Mundi Hospital. The following day's papers carried news of a "violent quarrel" that had prompted Taylor to walk out on Burton as he stood, smoldering, on the porch of the stucco bungalow they were staying in. "Burton told her to go and get rid of herself, and she tried to," Wanger later said confidentially. "This was the one time that she really took an overdose and she was really in danger." Taylor again denies that suicide was her intent, saying that, as had been the case in February, she needed some respite.

The hospitalization could be explained away with the old standbys "exhaustion" and "food poisoning," but the reason she didn't work again until May 7—that she had a black eye and facial bruises—could not be so tidily addressed. Skouras, in a letter to Darryl Zanuck several months later, matter-of-factly referred to "the beating Burton gave her in Santo Stefano. She got two black eyes, her nose was out of shape, and it took 22 days for her to recover enough in order to resume filming." But Taylor maintains that the truth was what the press was told—that her bruises were incurred during the ride back from Porto Santo Stefano. "I was sleeping in the backseat of the car," she says, "and the driver went around a curve, and I bumped my nose on an ashtray."

Once Taylor's bruises healed, she went back to work. But more bad luck followed. The winds came up on some of the days the extras and dancers had been convened to continue work on the procession, canceling shooting at a cost of $250,000. A successfully completed scene that required Antony to slap Cleopatra to the ground—a loaded proposition made more so by the fact that Taylor had a bad back—was erased when the film was damaged in transit back to the United States; June retakes would be necessary. Then, on May 28, word slipped out to Levathes that Taylor had filmed Cleopatra's death scene, in which she commits suicide by letting an asp bite her hand. The death scene was, in the eyes of Fox's impatient executives, the one sequence the film could absolutely not do without. Knowing it existed, Levathes headed for Rome to shut down the picture.

On June 1, Wanger met with Levathes and learned that, effective the following day, he was being taken off salary and expenses. This was in every sense a quasi-firing, in that no one discouraged him from continuing to work on the film. So continue he did, contesting, with Mankiewicz, the New York office's demands that Taylor's last day be June 9, that the battle of Pharsalia sequence be canceled, and that all photography be completed by June 30. (A week later, back in the states, Levathes fired Marilyn Monroe from her abortive final film, *Something's Got to Give.* A Fox spokesman said, "No company can afford Monroe and Taylor.")

In haste, the *Cleopatra* production moved to the Italian island of Ischia, which was standing in for both Actium, the ancient Greek town near whose shores Octavian defeated Antony, and Tarsus, the Turkish port of the Roman Empire where Cleopatra made her second great entrance, aboard a barge. (The barge, complete with gilded stern and Dacron purple sails flown in from California, cost $277,000.)

It was off Ischia that a paparazzo named Marcello Geppetti took the photograph that most enduringly represents the Taylor-Burton affair: a shot of Burton planting a kiss on a smiling Taylor as both sun themselves in bathing suits on the deck of an anchored boat.

Taylor completed a successful take of Cleopatra's arrival aboard her barge on June 23. By studio decree, it was her last day on the picture—272 days after Mankiewicz had begun at Cinecittà, 632 days after Mamoulian had commenced shooting at Pinewood.

Battle-sequence work in Egypt would keep Mankiewicz busy through July, and battles with Fox occupied him in the weeks prior. While still on Ischia, the director learned that Fox was killing yet another crucial sequence, the battle of Philippi. Mankiewicz was enraged, having planned for the Philippi conflict to open the film's second half. On June 29, he sent a strongly worded telegram to Skouras and the Fox brass:

WITHOUT PHARSALIA IN MY OPINION OPENING OF FILM AND FOLLOWING SEQUENCES SEVERELY DAMAGED STOP BUT WITHOUT PHILIPPI THERE IS LITERALLY NO OPENING FOR SECOND HALF SINCE INTERIOR TENT SCENES ALREADY SHOT SIMPLY CANNOT BE INTELLIGIBLY PUT TOGETHER STOP . . . WITH MUTUAL APPRECIATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND SUGGESTING THAT MINE TOWARD THE STOCKHOLDERS IS NO LESS THAN YOURS I SUGGEST THAT YOU REPLACE ME SOONEST POSSIBLE BY SOMEONE LESS CRITICAL OF YOUR DIRECTIVES AND LESS DEDICATED TO THE EVE SUCCESS OF CLEOPATRA.

Fox placated Mankiewicz by all Pharsalia to be partially reconstitu two days' worth of hasty shoot some craggy Italian hills—and ther *patra* moved on to Egypt for add battle work.

The Egypt trip, from July 15 t 24, was the by-now-customary marred by delays, poor sanitary tions, a threatened strike by the hired extras, and government wiret the telephones of Jewish cast an members; adding injury to insult, was the further deterioration of kiewicz's physical condition—he re daily B_{12} shots to keep going, ar shot hit his sciatic nerve, renderi barely able to walk.

Principal photography was now plete. But Mankiewicz would have to contend with in the film's length production phase: a new Fox r Back on June 26, under pressure, ras had announced his resignat president, effective September 20.

ENTER THE MUSTACHE: NEW YOR ANGELES, PARIS, LONDON, SPAIN, 19 *IT LOOKS LIKE MUSTACHE WITH Z PLANKHEAD.*

—Cable sent from Jack B (in Fox's New York to Nathan Weiss (in Fox's ter Rome office), July

"Mustache" was Darryl Z "Zeus" was Skouras. Upon ras's resignation, Zanuck, whose was still the single largest shareho Fox stock, made a play to take co the faltering company he had co-f in 1933. By outmaneuvering the board factions and their design president, he engineered a coup summertime had installed him a dent and relegated Skouras to a ceremonial chairman-of-the-boar tion (ergo, "Zeus as plankhead").

Zanuck surveyed the state of af Fox like a police chief arriving at bid crime scene—*move away, pal, over.* He shut down virtually all F ductions save *Cleopatra,* dismisse of the studio's employees and exe lowered the thermostats, shuttere of the buildings on the shrunke lot, and replaced Levathes with h son, producer Richard Zanuck.

Mankiewicz and Darryl Zanuc complex love-hate relationship th often tipped toward the latter. Bu rector was relieved to know th now a decisive CONTINUED ON P





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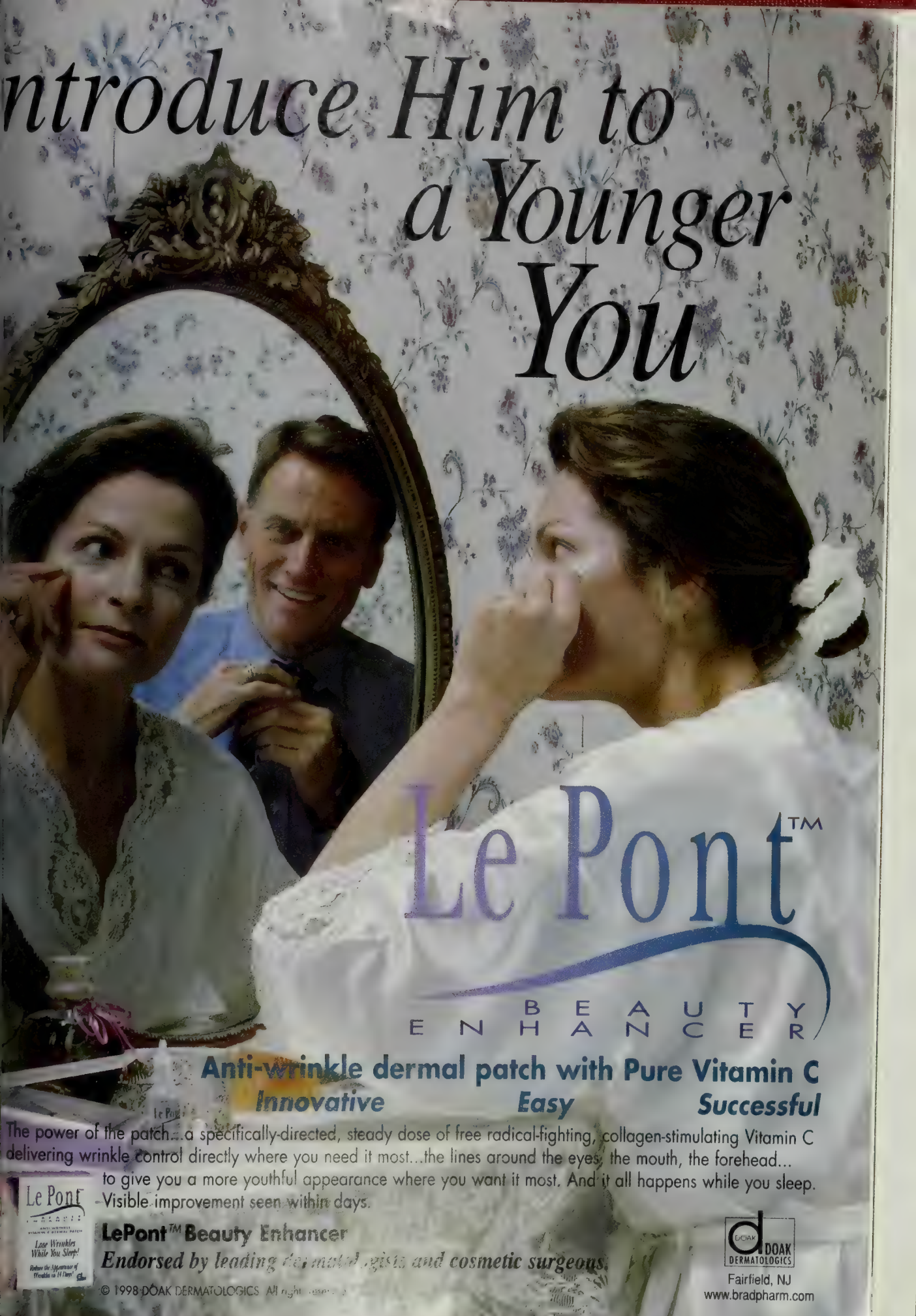
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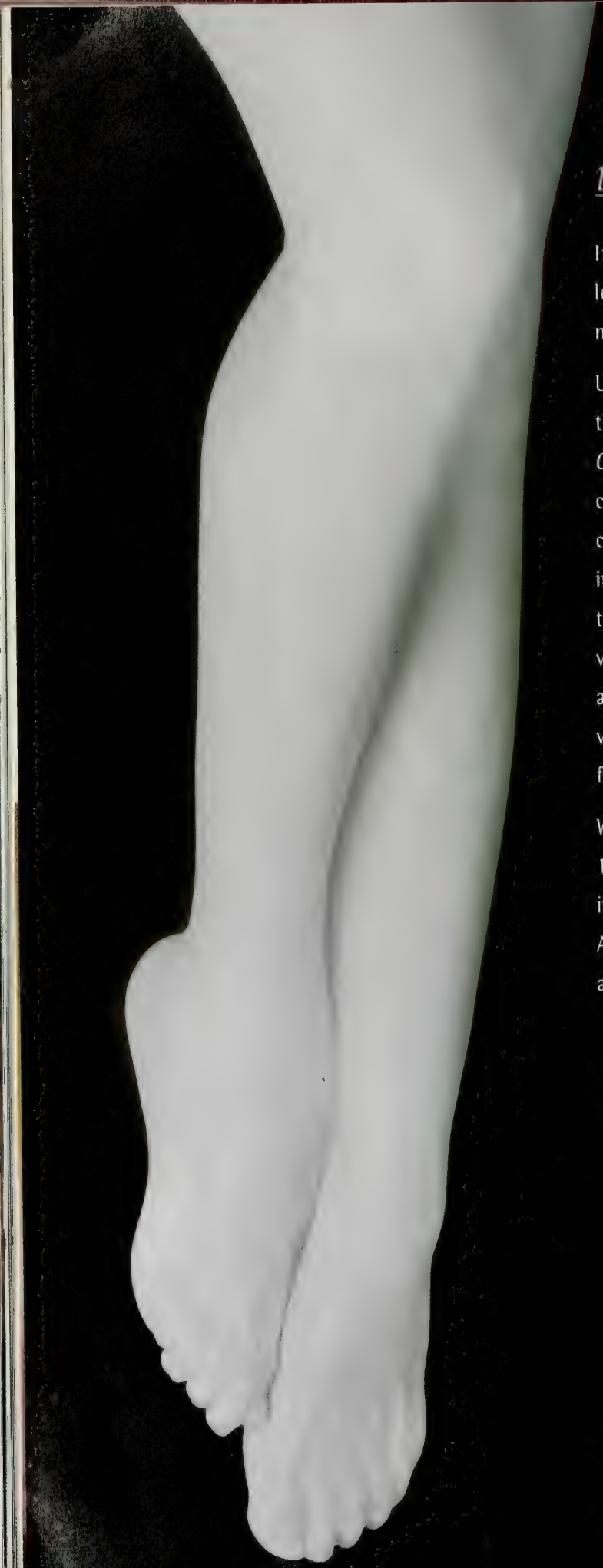
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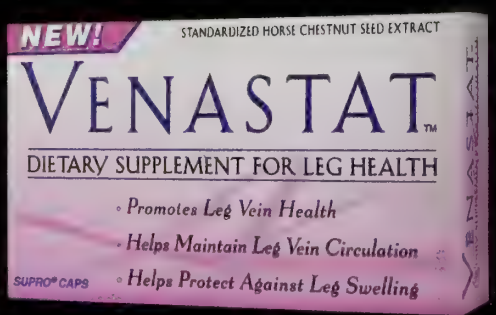
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eopatra

NUED FROM PAGE 388 man at the nd someone who knew the ins and f picture-making to boot. "When I d a screenplay, the first person I d to read it was Darryl," Mankie- said in 1982, recalling the days Zanuck was Fox's chief of produc- t was Zanuck who resolved one of ewicz's biggest writerly dilemmas— o pare down an overlong screen- ntitled *A Letter to Four Wives*—by ting that Mankiewicz eliminate the wives.

k in Los Angeles, Mankiewicz and tor, Dorothy Spencer, prepared a cut of *Cleopatra* that ran five hours enty minutes and reflected his de- present *Cleopatra* in two concur- released parts, with separate tickets d for each: *Caesar and Cleopatra,* d by *Antony and Cleopatra.* Fox ng been against the idea, because xhibition logistics involved and be- no one was interested in seeing make love to Rex Harrison.

kiewicz made a date with Zanuck en the film on October 13 in where the new Fox president lived ntinued to work, even though he nning an American studio). As e approached, Wanger sent Zan- series of obsequious letters and ns, begging to be fully reinstated ucer: I BESEECH YOU, DARRYL . . . AGGRAVATE THIS SITUATION AND R DAMAGE MY STATUS AS PRO- OF CLEOPATRA BY NOT BRINGING PARIS . . . I APPEAL TO YOU AS A OT TO DO THIS TO ME. Zanuck's oulder reply was that Wanger was e to come along provided he own way.

October 13 screening did not go arly well. Zanuck said little to wicz as the lights went up except woman behaved toward me the opatra treated Antony, I would balls off."

kiewicz grew nervous when a assed without him hearing any- rther. On October 20, he sent a Zanuck requesting an "honest equivocal statement of where I relation to *Cleopatra.*"

ctober 21, he got his statement. mpletion of the dubbing, your ervices will be terminated," Zan- te. "If you are available and I will call upon you to screen dited version of the film." Else- the letter, which ran to nine single-spaced pages, Zanuck described the existing battle sequences as "awkward, amateurish . . . second-rate film making" with a "B-picture" look, said that the film "over-emphasized in some places the *Esquire*-type of sex"; described Wanger as "impotent"; contrasted Mankiewicz's handling of *Cleopatra* unfavorably with his own handling of *The Longest Day;* and alleged, "You were not the official producer, yet in the history of motion pictures no one man has ever been given such authority. The records show that you made every single decision and that your word was law."

A few days later, Zanuck released the following statement to the press: "In exchange for top compensation and a considerable expense account, Mr. Joseph Mankiewicz has for two years spent his time, talent, and $35,000,000 of 20th Century–Fox's shareholders' money to direct and complete the first cut of the film *Cleopatra.* He has earned a well-deserved rest."

In response, the director told the press, "I made the first cut, but after that, it's the studio's property. They could cut it up into banjo picks if they want."

Privately, Mankiewicz sent Zanuck yet another letter that painstakingly refuted every charge made against him in the October 21 correspondence: "I am, I suppose, an old whore on this beat, Darryl, and it takes quite a bit to shock me . . . but never could I imagine the phantasmagoria of frantic lies and frenzied phony buck-passing that you report [in] your letter!"

By December, however, the two men's temperatures had cooled, and they recognized that their cooperation was necessary to get *Cleopatra* into releasable form. Zanuck conceded to Mankiewicz that the previous regime's cutbacks on Pharsalia and Philippi had been a mistake, and so, in February 1963—at a cost of $2 million—*Cleopatra*'s company of soldiers was reconvened in Almería, Spain, to do battle. Further bits and pieces were shot in—irony of ironies—Pinewood Studios in England, where the whole mess had begun with Mamoulian 29 months earlier.

When the reshoots were done. Mankiewicz, with Zanuck looking over his shoulder, edited *Cleopatra* down to its 243-minute premiere length. Though they were publicly allies again, the director was unhappy with this version and still thought Zanuck had done him a disservice by not allowing *Cleopatra* to be shown in two parts. When Mankiewicz was asked to participate in a fluffy NBC tribute program called *The World of Darryl Zanuck,* he said he'd do it only if they retitled it *Stop the World of Darryl Zanuck.*

Nevertheless, *Cleopatra,* at last, was done.

CODA: NEW YORK, ETC., 1963–

"She is an entirely physical creature, no depth of emotion apparent in her kohl-laden eyes, no modulation in her voice that too often rises to fishwife levels. Out of royal regalia, en negligee or au naturel, she gives the impression that she is really carrying on in one of Miami Beach's more exotic resorts than inhabiting a palace in ancient Alexandria."

—Judith Crist, evaluating Taylor's performance in her review of *Cleopatra* for the *New York Herald Tribune,* June 13, 1963

Cleopatra opened at the Rivoli Theater to mixed reviews, Crist's being the most damning, Bosley Crowther's, in *The New York Times,* being the most enthusiastic ("a surpassing entertainment, one of the great epic films of our day"). A viewing unprejudiced by temporal context reveals the movie to be mediocre-to-good, a tribute to Mankiewicz's salvaging abilities and the fact that, for all the waste, you do see a lot of the money up on the screen—the movie looks handsome and expensive in an old-fashioned, 2,000-artisans-at-work way, as opposed to the contemporary, postproduced-in-the-computer-lab way. The procession sequence is as mind-boggling as it's supposed to be.

Taylor's Cleopatra comes off as an imperious harridan, a seething Imelda, but she's actually effective—you believe her dream of empire. Still, you can't help but notice the inconsistency of her physical appearance throughout the film, a consequence of the events and upheavals she was enduring. At times, she's skinny and youthful; other times, she's fleshy but ravishing; still other times, damned if she isn't Mrs. John Warner foretold. The male leads' fortunes are more contingent upon the circumstances under which Mankiewicz wrote their parts. Whereas Harrison gets all the good lines, Burton looks ludicrous and spends most of his screen time shouting, flaring his nostrils, and huffing around Alexandria in a strangely tiny mini-toga (he shows more leg than Cyd Charisse). Not that poor writing was entirely to blame—Mankiewicz's completed screenplay contains nuanced, character-building Antony scenes that never should have ended up on the cutting-room floor.

Business at the Rivoli was good, and the movie sold out for the next four

Cleopatra

months; Skouras, his exhibitor's skills coming to the fore, had shrewdly arranged a deal whereby Fox collected $1.25 million in advance guarantees from the theater before a single ticket had been sold. Applying this strategy worldwide, he collected $20 million in pre-release grosses.

The movie was never the runaway hit Wanger had dreamed of, but a year after its release it was one of the top-10 grossers of all time, and in 1966, when Fox sold the television broadcast rights to ABC for $5 million, *Cleopatra* passed the break-even mark. The studio had by then rehabilitated itself—*The Sound of Music,* which had come out a year earlier and cost $8 million to make, was an unexpected megahit, grossing more than $100 million.

But the travails of *Cleopatra* did not end at the Rivoli. Subsequent to the New York premiere, Fox chopped the film down further. For the Washington, D.C., and London premieres, a three-hour forty-seven-minute version was shown. When the film went into wide release, it was even shorter, running at three hours and twelve minutes. If big-city moviegoers were gypped out of seeing Mankiewicz's vision realized, most Americans were gypped out of seeing a comprehensible film.

Recently, with the support of the Mankiewicz family and Fox's current studio chief, Bill Mechanic, archivists have been laboring to reconstruct a six-hour "director's cut" of the film that would do better justice to Burton's part, and the film as a whole, than the 243-minute "opening night" version currently available on video. Their efforts have revealed that Mankiewicz's cynical divination of *Cleopatra*'s ultimate fate—that it would end up as the world's most expensive banjo picks—wasn't that far off. The *Cleopatra* he envisioned has scattered to the winds. Some missing footage has turned up in the hands of private collectors. Other bits and pieces have been discovered, uncatalogued and a mile deep in the earth, in an underground storage facility in Kansas. Further bits have turned up in even stranger places: Richard Green and Geoffrey Sharpe, two eagle-eyed *Cleopatra* enthusiasts in London who are assisting Fox in the restoration efforts, noticed that Charlton Heston used chunks of excised Mankiewicz footage to flesh out his 1972 low-budget vanity production of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra.*

Appropriately, the saga of *Cleopatra* dragged unhappily on for several more years after its release, a dénouement of bad blood, threats, and lawsuits. Taylor, Burton, and Fisher sued Fox for their proper shares of the grosses. Fox sued Taylor and Burton for breach of contract, specifically citing the former for, among other things, "suffering herself to be held up to scorn, ridicule, and unfavorable publicity as a result of her conduct and deportment." Wanger sued Skouras, Zanuck, and Fox for breach of contract. Fox sued Wanger right back on the same grounds. Skouras contemplated a libel suit against Wanger for the way he was portrayed in the 1963 book *My Life with Cleopatra,* and another suit against the publicists Brodsky and Weiss for the way he came across in *their* book, also 1963, *The Cleopatra Papers.* By the mid-60s, after several GATT-like rounds of depositions and negotiations, all of the various actions were eventually resolved.

The matter of the Fishers and the Burtons also stretched well beyond *Cleopatra*'s production life span. When principal filming was completed, Burton returned once more to his wife, and Taylor, for the first time in years, had a man in her life. By early 1963, however, the two had reunited to do another movie, *The V.I.P.s,* a London-based production that gave them an excuse to take adjacent suites in the Dorchester. Then Burton filed for divorce that December. Fisher, after months of ugly public exchanges with Taylor over the division of their property, finally gave up the fight on March 5, 1964, when he failed to contest her petition for a Mexican divorce.

Burton was playing Hamlet in Toronto to when Taylor's divorce was final and she was with him. They married in Montreal on March 15. The following night Burton was back in Toronto playing Hamlet. Dane. After taking his curtain call, presented his wife to the audience, declaimed, to the audience's delight, would just like to quote from the play. Act III, Scene I: 'We will have no more marriages.'" □

Rainer

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 362 don't want you to write bullshit. I would come personally over and kill you." Later she says, "My life has been so full. To come to the essence of one's existence, one must speak of things that are both true and not true. . . . For every statement, there is a counterstatement. . . . You will never be able to write about my life! There is too much."

I have come to London to see her because, for the first time in more than 50 years, she is in a movie, filmed in Hungary, of Dostoyevsky's *The Gambler,* starring the English actor Michael Gambon as the novelist. Her decision to play the part seems of a piece with her personality: the imp of the perverse. "Everyone thinks I am dead!" she tells me. "They all say, 'Luise Rainer, she can't be still alive!'" Rainer's 15-minute appearance is high-camp relief in the ponderous film. Carried in on a sedan chair, wearing a black dress and feathers, she plays an aristocratic matriarch in a world of croupiers. "Did you think I vould send a telegram?" she asks with bravura, after surprising her son, a gambling addict. Rainer's face, gloriously lined and filled with intrigue, shines from the poster at the theater on Shaftesbury Avenue.

One afternoon Rainer tells me that she is flying alone to Africa in December on the eve of her 88th birthday. My obvious surprise makes her snappish: "If you were my daughter, you would try to lock me up in a cell to prevent me from going, but I must be free! . . . If I am killed, I've had an extraordinary life. You will not be able to prevent me from going! I must live!"

Her life has been an ongoing rebellion against any form of domination. She was reared in a well-to-do family in Düsseldorf. Rainer's father, Henry, orphaned at seven, had been sent to Dallas, Texas, to be raised by a prosperous uncle in the import-export business. He had crossed the Atlantic on a schooner, and two decades later, in 1907, returned to Europe. Then in Dallas, Rainer had become an American citizen, which would save his life during World War II. In Essen on business he saw a beautiful young girl on a swing at a carnival. That night he was invited to dinner to meet with a local industrialist. The hostess's sister, who was also at the dinner, turned out to be the girl on the swing, Emily Königsberg, a gifted pianist. Rainer's future in-laws were assimilated Jewish *hauts bourgeois* who lived in a world of privilege, with ladies' maids and daily visits from the *coiffeur,* embro-



TWO-TIMER

Oscar night 1938, for films presented in 1937. From left: Louis B. Mayer, head of MGM; Luise Rainer, winner for the second year in a row as best actress, this time for *The Good Earth;* Mrs. Spencer Tracy, accepting for her husband, winner as best actor for *Captains Courageous;* and director Frank Capra, winner in 1936 for *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town.*

ux, and holidays at the seashore. r ruled Emily and their three like a tyrant, Francesca Bowyer e believes that her mother felt di- l by her father's harsh ways. mily was terrified of him," she . "My mother had to spend so me proving how intelligent she ainer recalls moving from city to n she was a child, as her father d his oil-and-soybean import- usiness. "I changed school eight she says. "I lived in Munich dur- errible flu epidemic . . . and then to Switzerland," where, she says, to school." The family settled in g in 1922.

r once told Odets that she was "a nth child, and I am missing those ths and I want them back." Her en made "terrible scenes. . . . He ave the house." Rainer, her father's favorite, viewed him as "a tragic figure," a sort of Don Quixote with a dim sense of reality. When she announced to her parents that she intended to be an actress, she says, her father "implied I was a whore. He said, 'It is a low and vulgar profession.' . . . I was thrown out of my house at age 16 or 17, and I had to live on apples and eggs!"

Often, with Rainer, I felt that I was observing her through a transparent bubble, taking down a narrative of her life not unaffected by illusion. "I'm going to tell you everything," she had said melodramatically on our first afternoon, and I occasionally imagined that I was an audience of one, lost in a world of vanished splendor, which Rainer had neatly shaped into perfect scenes. As a teenager living with her grandparents outside Düsseldorf, she told me in the plummy tone of an ingenue, she appeared one day at the door of an important theater belonging to Louise Dumont, a well-known theater owner of the era. "I presented myself to the secretary and said something completely idiotic, like 'I would like to have a job for next season.'" She was 16 years old, with a perfect, heart-shaped face and a fragile beauty. Granted an audition, she did a scene from Schiller's *Joan of Arc.*

In her first months at the Schauspiel Haus in Düsseldorf, she took the lead in Frank Wedekind's sexually frank *Spring Awakening.* Soon Rainer was sent for by the great director Max Reinhardt. She eventually joined his Vienna company and became part of an impressionistic acting tradition which emphasized Reinhardt's rejection of the naturalistic style.

Rainer flourished in this atmosphere, although she also acted elsewhere, starring in an adaptation of Theodore Dreiser's

Rainer

An American Tragedy and Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure.* Reinhardt's company was an insular culture, protected, they believed, from the Fascism that was sweeping Germany.

All around them, however, were signs of the inevitable. In 1933, while Rainer was in Berlin performing in a French play, *Sardine Fisherman,* she was called to a meeting with producer Victor Barnovsky, who wanted to cast her as Cleopatra. Sitting in his office, Rainer looked out the window. Later, she wrote in her unpublished memoirs:

> I saw . . . first a cloud of smoke and flames, high flames licking the sky. . . . It was light, then dark. The Reichstag went up in flames. How could I tell what Barnovsky was talking about? Adolf Hitler was to declare my race had "poisoned blood." . . . Barnovsky, his back to the window, was angered by my total inattention. "Don't stare out the window. Whatever this is, think of your work and nothing else. This all has nothing to do with you."

Rainer was apolitical; caught up in her life as a young star, she was driven by emotion. The expressionist playwright Ernst Toller was in love with her, and she became enamored of a well-known director. "There were so many men," she told me. On the morning after her first sexual experience, she twirled across the stage exclaiming, "I've lost my virginity!" Scorned by her father, she had made the theater her family. In Vienna she collected encomium after encomium. "How do you do that?" Max Reinhardt himself asked her after one performance. The company had the feeling almost of a religious cult, equals plying their art and being paid almost nothing for it. The growing tensions in the world outside were but a blip.

Soon Rainer began to worry about her parents. "This fellow Hitler is nothing, he's a housepainter," her father said. Henry Rainer published vigorous letters attacking Hitler. Rainer did not believe in religion; he had turned against it as a boy, and now convinced himself that the Nazis were unaware of his wife's Jewish origins, which were never discussed in the house. The Rainers had the deep ambivalence about their religion which was an integral aspect of much of the German upper middle class. All of the children were reared "wild, with no religion at all," Luise Rainer said. She used Goethe's word *Wahlverwandtschaft*—elective affinity, meaning, for her, choosing one's own relatives—to describe her ties.

Rainer was very aware of her history. "I never made a secret about it," she said. "This whole thing about being Jewish . . . it's a very American thing. In Europe, on the Continent, people of the upper class never talked about Jewishness or not Jewishness. . . . Then came Hitler. *Then* this became an issue."

Rainer was besieged by admirers, who filled her dressing room with flowers. She had a rich girl's willfulness; she gave the impression of being entitled and oblivious, a dangerous set of traits. In Frankfurt, soldiers worked as stagehands at the theater, wearing brown shirts and heavy boots. "I said to them, 'Would you do me a great favor? Get rid of those blasted boots and put on slippers, as stagehands normally do!' " Another time, as part of the play she was in, she asked the young actress who played the maid to bring her flowers onstage so that the audience could see them. The Gestapo visited the theater and accosted her. "I was told that I had told the stagehands to strip their uniforms! And that I had asked a talented young actress to bring me flowers, as a page boy to a queen!" Because of her status as a star, however, Rainer had been given a special title: Honorary Aryan.

She was soon offered an escape from the growing chaos in Frankfurt—a European tour with Reinhardt's production of Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author.* The playwright accompanied the tour, and Rainer recalls him as "a birdlike little man, pixilated." In Vienna one night at the theater, she met a young, rich Dutchman, who later arranged a party so that he could see her again. Rainer fell deeply in love with him. He pursued her everywhere, flying her in his two-seater plane over the Dutch tulip fields. "He was everything to me," she said.

In Vienna, a scout from MGM saw her perform and asked her to go to London to read for the film version of Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms.* The Dutchman insisted on flying her there for her screen test. As Rainer unpacked, she realized she had brought two left silk shoes. She became hysterical because she could not afford new ones, and she would not allow her lover to buy them for her. "Shoes from a man! I would never have accepted," she said. He gallantly crossed the Channel to Amsterdam, where her luggage was with friends, and returned to present her with her right shoe in a basket. Within months, he would be killed when his plane crashed in Africa.

Rainer was invited to Hollywood in 1935. Mourning her lost love, sh fallen into an affair with his brothe physically resembled him. "I had them up in my mind," she told me they were not at all alike." She c on the *Île-de-France* and celebrate 25th birthday on the ship. The vi Mischa Elman serenaded her in th ing room. During the trip she disc she was pregnant. "It was a romant otic thing! I thought that the child be like [her dead lover]. . . . It young foolishness." Walking Johnr Scottish terrier, on deck, she realiz could never have the baby and ke career.

"Darling, don't make me a t enne," Rainer said of this period. " I went to America I thought they take one look at me and send me again. . . . I never dreamed of bec a movie actress, never. My father talked about America. I could se America that I'd always heard of."

Rainer was taken from the tra tion to the Beverly Wilshire and at the desk she spotted Gary C "I nearly fainted," she said. She went for a walk through Beverly "There were flowers all over! I c believe all of the windows were and the lights were on, and it was theater. You could see what the were doing!"

She was invited to a party at the Jeanette MacDonald's, where sh MGM's then reigning star, Norma er, and her husband, producer Thalberg, as well as the émigré d Ernst Lubitsch. Soon she was sent Louis B. Mayer's closest studio ai die Mannix. Rainer had no se American slang. "They had me rea they slapped me on the back an 'See you later!' " She thought sl been invited to a party. Next they her around the lot at Metro, throu back streets and onto a set where Weissmuller was filming a Tarzan The drive continued. At one poin asked the driver what set they w now. Beverly Hills, he said.

She was given a small house i Monica, down the beach from and Thalberg. Rainer took long with her dog and studied Englis day she met the writer Anita Loo asked her, "Aren't you that girl w came from abroad? The studio is all over the world for a woman over Myrna Loy's role in *Escapa* should call the studio." With cal teur, Rainer told Loos, "I'll wa

come to me." They did. She was cast *capade,* a turn-of-the-century Vien- romance, opposite William Powell, was so impressed with her that he ered Louis B. Mayer about her bill- 'You have to star that girl or I look n idiot,' he said," Rainer recalled. is how I became a star!"

m the start, the studio played up ainer's waiflike appeal. In clips of eriod, there is no mention of the fact her family owned a large import- t company or that she was German; id growing anti-German sentiment, tudio called her Viennese. MGM plans to typecast her as the aban- l wife, the woman scorned. After *Es- e,* she was again paired with Wil- Powell, in Robert Leonard's elabo- ilm biography, *The Great Ziegfeld,* featured cameos by vaudeville stars Bolger and Fanny Brice.

cording to Rainer, "Louis B. Mayer ot want me to do that part. Suddenly a new star, and they had not expect- t! . . . The producer Hunt Stromberg o me, 'Please go to Mayer and tell at you would like to do it.'

was very unsophisticated! They had n the telephone scene. It was noth- said, 'Can I write that scene?'. . . went to Louis B. and said, 'Look, I much want to do this film. There is ne. . . . I might be able to make hing out of it!' He was very an- . He thought I was wrong! He said, e out after the film is halfway I said, 'I don't care how long the !'" Rainer had seen Cocteau's one- ay *La Voix Humaine,* a monologue woman talking on the phone. She ed it, she said, and instructed rd, "Do it in one take."

en *The Great Ziegfeld* turned out to re than four hours long, Mayer fa- insisted that Rainer's "dreary" ne scene had to go. Stromberg to save the scene. It stayed in, and ainer her first Academy Award. At emony, held at the Biltmore Hotel, re a charming white suit and posed between Paul Muni, who won the tor award, for *The Story of Louis* . and Frank Capra, who won as rector, for *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town.* night she accepted the Oscar, she he had no sense of what an Acade- ward meant. "Darling, in Europe not need these accolades. It was a me." For film critic and author Haskell, "Rainer's Oscar represent- lywood rewarding high culture with ul C. It was a reward for theater art and a sign that Hollywood still did not take itself seriously." The award, however, allowed Rainer to demand better movies. "I was an enigma to them. They did not know how to handle me. I would say, 'I don't care about money.' And they would say how 'shrewd' I was. I didn't even know what the word 'shrewd' meant. It was so crazy!"

Rainer chafed under the studio system; lacking the political skills of Joan Crawford or the grit of Bette Davis, she was soon on a collision course with Mayer. A 1936 *Collier's* profile of her, titled "The Girl Who Hates Movies," reported that her very name caused arguments all over town. She was either "a talented young woman who does as she pleases" or "a shrewd, phony, fake temperamental lady with big eyes and an exaggerated opinion of herself." Rainer made no secret of her feelings about the movies. "This is not acting," she told *Collier's,* adding that she would love to return to Vienna and her life as a theater star.

Rainer arrived at MGM when it was a feudal system ruled by a despot and nicknamed "Mayer's-Ganz-Mispochen," Yiddish for "Mayer's whole family." Louis B. Mayer wanted stars to be obedient and docile. Crossing him was like asking to be run out of town. The atmosphere was doggedly provincial. When Hunt Stromberg took Emlyn Williams's play *Night Must Fall* to Mayer, the studio chief said, "We make pretty pictures." (*Night Must Fall* would become one of the first psychological mystery films.) Rainer's Mitteleuropa sophistication was protected from Mayer solely by Irving Thalberg.

Mayer appeared baffled by Rainer, who was taken up by the European-exile community and developed friendships with the novelists Thomas Mann and Erich Remarque, the composers George Gershwin and Harold Arlen, the lyricist E. Y. "Yip" Harburg, and the architect Richard Neutra. She criticized Mayer publicly, as if her talent could protect her. "They call me a Frankenstein that will destroy the studio," she told *Modern Screen.* "It is more important to me to be a human being than to be an actress."

On the first morning we are together, I raise the subject of fame. How could Rainer have so easily walked away from what most actresses spend a lifetime trying to achieve? "I was never aware that I was anybody," she says dramatically. "Do you want to hear what I wrote about this?" she asks. She retreats to her study and emerges with a sheaf of paper from her 240 pages of unpublished memoirs. Softly she begins to read about a dinner which would alter her life. It was the autumn of 1936, and Rainer was at the Brown Derby with George Gershwin and Harold Arlen:

A hush came over the restaurant. Someone had entered. I did not know him. Heads turned. Most others seemed to know him. . . . His eyes came to rest on our table. Slowly he came towards us. He spoke to Gershwin and to Harold Arlen, and they asked him to sit down. I was introduced. "Clifford Odets, our new Chekhov." I had never heard of him. Tall, well-built, with large gray-green eyes, his light hair brushed back from his high forehead. He somehow reminded one of a disciple. He did not address me with a single word. During conversation and questions concerning his last play, which, as I heard, was the rave of New York's critics, he answered in a quiet, low voice. I felt strange. What was that? There was something flamelike about this man, attractive, warming, burning as well. As though to protect myself, I moved my chair a little away. And he noticed it and looked at me. Our eyes met.

Two weeks later, Rainer was invited to a party at the home of Dorothy Parker:

Except for Ginger Rogers, most guests were unknown to me. On the far side of the room, surrounded by people who seemed to lap up his words, stood Clifford Odets. Over the crowd I felt him looking at me. I left early: I had to be up at six o'clock in the morning to get to the studio by seven A.M. . . . A few days later while on location, I was called to the telephone. It was a man's voice: Clifford Odets. "Can one ever see you alone?" he asked. Two evenings later he collected me and took me out to dinner. We went to a restaurant at the end of the long Santa Monica pier. Afterwards we went for a walk along the beach. To my horror, it was littered with lifeless fish. Something in the water had poisoned them. I trembled. Clifford Odets took me back to my house. That night started for me the wildest, the most compelling and frenetic, the most tragic relationship. It changed the flight and rhythm of my life.

Rainer stops and looks up. "You see," she says, "I used to fly. I had wings inside. And suddenly I could no longer fly."

Brilliant and tormented, the creator of an American theater of protest, the Philadelphia-born Clifford Odets would soon be on the cover of *Time. Awake and Sing!* and *Waiting for Lefty* had brought a new vocabulary of realism to the stage. They were performed by the Group Theatre, a New York company devoted to the acting method of Stanislavski, whose members included Harold Clurman, Elia Kazan, Lee J. Cobb, and Stella Adler. In

Rainer

the summer, the Group would adjourn to Lake Grove in upstate New York to work on its next season. Like many of the young intellectuals of the era, some of them were strongly left-wing, sympathetic to the Loyalists fighting in the Spanish Civil War. Later, in August 1940, along with Humphrey Bogart and Franchot Tone, Rainer would be interviewed by Martin Dies Jr., who was conducting a witch-hunt for Hollywood Communists.

When Rainer talks about her three-year marriage to Odets, she quotes Oscar Wilde: "Each man kills the thing he loves." "He devoured me," she says. Rainer calls Odets "the passion of my life," but she says he was constantly torn between his commitment to the Group and his desire for intimacy.

At one point, she brings out a binder filled with hundreds of Odets's letters to her. They are carefully preserved, each page in a plastic cover. Because Odets was forced to remain in New York for much of their courtship and subsequent marriage, his letters were prolix, discursive, filled with longing and dread. He sometimes wrote three times a day. Of a weekend they spent together, he wrote,

> very good, nourishing, and I . . . [am] better and happier than I've been for a long time. . . . It would be terrible if something happened, if in the end we went different ways. . . . I give you Beethoven's Seventh because it is most like what I feel for you, not forgetting the slow movement. How terrible and wonderful this feeling. . . . How wonderful our last night together.

Odets's passion for Rainer intrigued the press and nettled Odets's Group Theatre comrades. He was their leftist hero, son of a Jewish printer from the Bronx, all hard edges and nasal accent, and he was dazzled by Rainer's beauty and delicate *grand bourgeois* manners. "Clifford was a poet," Rainer says. She did not disguise her resentment of director Harold Clurman's influence over Odets, which resembled Mayer's domination of her. She told Odets that Clurman was "fattening on him," according to Odets's biographer Margaret Brenman-Gibson, and 60 years later Rainer still says Clurman "behaved very badly. He was very possessive of Odets, and I was of course in the way."

She was filming *The Good Earth* during the first months of their romance, and the production appeared "jinxed and interminable," according to Brenman-Gibson. It took years to complete. George Hill, the first director, committed suicide; the next director, Victor Fleming, fell ill. Sidney Franklin, who finished the picture, and Irving Thalberg had to pacify Chiang Kai-shek, who thought the film would concentrate on the suffering in China.

Rainer again fought her bosses. "The makeup man wanted to make a complete mask." She insisted on playing the part with almost no makeup. "I became Chinese," she says. "I came one day when they tested people for mass scenes. There were many Chinese people—cooks, waiters, servants. . . . And my pocketbook under my arm fell. As I bent down, one of the little Chinese women also bent down. Our heads hit, and she looked at me. . . . She was O-Lan."

The scale of the production was immense; Franklin orchestrated swarms of peasants, a revolution, even a plague of locusts. Paul Muni's wife sat on the set every day in a deck chair, Rainer recalls peevishly, instructing the cameraman on the best angles for Rainer's co-star. Rainer's performance was a tour de force. "What is revolution?" O-Lan asks during a famine, then answers herself, "A revolution makes food." Ironically, the strong-willed Rainer was lauded twice for performances in which she walked two steps behind a powerful husband. In the front office, meanwhile, Mayer feuded with Thalberg, her champion, over the making of quality movies.

Odets wept when he learned in September 1936 of Thalberg's sudden death at 37 from pneumonia, for he identified with the creative genius cut down by philistines. He wrote to Luise:

> To have a harrowing sense of what can happen to anyone . . . well, it sickens one at the heart. . . . For what is work and effort without a friend, a lover, a mother and father and brother and sister all rolled into one? Darling, let me be all those things for you (and you for me). . . . For the present, Luise, I send you my softest, most tender self and the strength of my arms and mouth, all of which are very much in love with you.

For Rainer, the death of Thalberg, her protector, was ominous. Mayer now turned against all executives with "high-brow interests." He was furious that it was too late to recut *The Good Earth* into one of his "happy pictures about happy people." Rainer, trapped in a seven-year contract, could not control her resentment. She wrote Odets that she felt like "a bolt in their machinery." She would be destroyed as an artist if she had no say in the choice of script or director. In one letter, Odets advised her to calm down, and he took her to task for treating her agent, Myron Selznick, with disdain. "I want you to let Selznick work for you and to make him feel that you respect him as an agent," he wrote.

Nervous about marriage to the high-strung Rainer, Odets consulted a famous graphologist, Lucia Eastman, using code names to camouflage their identities. According to biographer Brenman-Gibson, who found the reports in his files, the young woman, Eastman wrote of L., was charming but had had some "problem hurt in her youthful days." She was suspicious, distrustful and had an "inverted vanity." A marriage would have to be "properly managed," because "Mr. Von Delf," as Odets had called himself, was "still very much of the small boy—sensitive and imaginative." He would need her to be both "wife and mother. . . . She will [have] to remember that a hurt child is often apt to try to return to the mother he loves."

The Odets-Clurman relationship, stormy and intense at best, was strained by the news of Odets's upcoming marriage. Clurman did not want the playwright's attention siphoned away from the Group. Odets ignored Clurman and went ahead with the marriage. Thoughtless and self-obsessed, he presented Rainer with night-gowns that would have fit a woman twice her size. The January 1937 ceremony at Luise's Brentwood house was interrupted when a swarm of photographers rushed through the door. The couple took off for a hotel in Ensenada, depressingly empty in the off-season except for a group of midgets. Odets stuck to his work schedule—midnight to dawn. "I was alone with the dwarfs downstairs," Luise said.

On the beach the next morning, Rainer saw Odets walking alone. She rushed to him to jump into his arms. "He ran away," she said. Luise soon began to see a pattern in his behavior. Later she would tell Anaïs Nin:

> He was always abandoning me. He used to leave at night after we made love, when I wanted him to sleep with me. When we were in Hollywood, he would come from New York with a small valise, and I would look first of all at the small valise and think he is already planning not to stay long. I felt deserted as soon as he arrived.

Rainer's life became defined by intense work and the strain of a difficult marriage. "I made eight films in three and a half years, and in the same period I had to shoot *The Great* twice, because Louis B. Mayer did

ie director's first cut. . . . I would home exhausted, change into some- pretty, and have dinner with Clif- who usually just wanted to be with one."

ner grew to detest Harold Clurman ien actor Elia Kazan, who, among from the Group, would stay for with the newlyweds in Los Ange- orking on Group Theatre produc- "It was terrible," she recalled. "They eat everything and drink every- I used to have to walk in the hills away from them." They could be h and rude. Kazan saw the opening *Good Earth,* and Rainer was anx- hear what he thought. "He never oned it to me," she said.

February 1938, she was nominated st actress, as was Greta Garbo for *le,* and Garbo was favored to win. g back to Los Angeles on Oscar following a two-week holiday with in San Francisco, Rainer called from Santa Barbara. "My maid antic. 'Miss Rainer, Miss Rainer, ust come immediately! The newspa- re calling. Tonight is the Academy s. They expect you there!'" Rainer quarrel with Odets, who was jeal- the attention she was receiving, nted to attend the ceremony alone. anted to go with me, but I didn't im to come," she said. "He made unhappy. He made me cry all of ie." Rainer rushed home to change. still arguing, they circled the Bilt- Hotel three times before she dashed ccept her award. The story has be- part of Hollywood Oscar lore.

ite her two Academy Awards, iner was mired in a sinkhole of de- Mayer used to say to us, 'Just give ood looker and I will make her an '" Once, gazing out her dressing- window, Rainer saw Greta Garbo g alone toward her set. "Ah, she's old," an MGM producer said to At the time, Garbo was 30.

s's obsession with his wife could unnerving; he often wrote down narks. "He once said a terrible He said, 'Darling, if ever you want mit suicide, do it in my arms.' If I en dead, he would have had me . . . I was like a slave with him, he never had me."

fights with Odets became increas- equent. Once, after a Sunday buf- ording to Neal Gabler's book *An of Their Own: How the Jews In- Hollywood,* Odets screamed at because she had not hired ser- vants to wait on the table. In Hollywood one had servants, the leftist playwright told his wife; otherwise why come here? When he was angry, he was monstrous, Rainer recalled. "The biggest thing was he used to say, 'Your instinct stinks.'" Forced by the studio to make one bad movie after another, Rainer could not get away—in her life or her career—from the role of the long-suffering victim. "They used to say, 'She can play a Chinese peasant or Ziegfeld's wife, so she is hard to cast,'" Rainer said. MGM forced her into such B movies as *The Emperor's Candlesticks, Dramatic School,* and *The Toy Wife,* a bathetic drama in which she plays Frou Frou, a coquette disregarded by her conventional husband, played by Melvyn Douglas.

As Rainer lobbied for better scripts, she was unaware of a crisis in the film industry. Movie grosses slumped during the recession of 1938. WAKE UP! HOLLYWOOD PRODUCERS read a full-page advertisement in *The Hollywood Reporter* that spring. "Practically all of the major studios are burdened with stars—whose public appeal is negligible." As theater owners pressured the studios to stop turning out prestige films, which made little money, Greta Garbo, Katharine Hepburn, and Marlene Dietrich were labeled box-office poison. The theater owners demanded lighter fare—Westerns, Charlie Chan movies, Andy Hardy.

In May 1938, Rainer discovered that she was pregnant. When Odets received the news coldly, Luise made another fast decision. "This love was so incredible. And I aborted his child. But it was his fault. Because he was terrible. . . . I knew it was not possible. He would have killed me." Later, Margaret Brenman-Gibson would discover in Odets's papers a wire he never sent to Luise. In it, he expressed pleasure at the news of the coming baby and urged her to run away from Metro and live with him in the country, where they could raise their child. Rainer told the biographer sadly that if she had received that telegram she would have done exactly that.

Odets would fly into rages at Rainer, breaking furniture and, once, "every plate in the house." Rainer recalled feeling "constantly diminished," as she had with her father. "Clifford would say, 'You want sugar, sugar, sugar all the time!'" she said. "Look at this picture," Rainer told me one day in London. "This was the story of our marriage." The photograph was startling. In it Rainer was surrounded by photographers. In the background Odets looked dazed and unhappy. "He was so jealous," she said.

In the summer of 1938, Odets left for Lake Grove with the Group to work on *Rocket to the Moon.* They were despondent, according to another Odets biographer, Gabriel Miller. The Group's finances were faltering, and they were three years from disbanding. Drinking heavily, Odets began a wildly romantic affair with the blonde actress Frances Farmer, who had been in his play *Golden Boy.* Later their relationship—including his throwing rose petals on the bed before they made love for the first time—would be portrayed by Jessica Lange and Jeffrey DeMunn in the 1982 film *Frances.*

"Nineteen thirty-eight was very, very hard," Rainer said. "In my private life, devastating. I was exhausted." Separated from Odets for five months, under pressure at the studio, Rainer vented her rage on her makeup woman, saying, "I don't want to make films anymore. I don't want to see this camera anymore. I can't stand myself on the screen! I don't want it anymore!" Soon after, she was summoned to Mayer's office. He was furious at her for her disloyalty, but he might have been placated by a display of humility. It was not to be. "Mr. Mayer, I cannot work anymore. It simply is that my source has dried out. I have to go away. I have to rest."

Rainer recalled his icy response: "What do you need a source for? Don't you have a director?" At the core of their famous argument was a clash not only of temperaments but also of class resentments. Mayer, the vulgar Eastern European, needed to dominate the snobbish German star. "If you can't release me from my contract, at least give me a leave of absence," she said.

"Luise, we've made you, and we're going to kill you," he said.

That moment, Rainer's career changed forever. She would not humble herself. "Mr. Mayer, you did not buy a cat in the sack. . . . I was already a star on the stage before I came here. I shall tell you something. All of your great actresses in this country are between their early 40s and 50s—Katharine Cornell, Helen Hayes, Gertrude Lawrence, Laurette Taylor. I am in my mid-20s. . . . In 20 years you will be dead. That is when I am starting to live!"

They never spoke again.

Breaking her contract, Rainer left Hollywood to rejoin Odets in New York. LUISE RAINER AND CLIFFORD ODETS RECONCILED AND SHE WANTS WORLD TOLD IN

Rainer

BIG HEADLINES, one paper bannered. It did not last. There was constant jockeying for power, which created an inexorable tension between them. Rainer wanted "security and peace," and Odets could never provide them. Increasingly sensitive to the coming war, Rainer was soon caught up in the terrible events in Europe. She had long since reconciled with her parents, but she could not get them to leave Hamburg. When Jewish neighborhoods were destroyed by Nazi storm troopers during Kristallnacht ("night of the broken glass"), she wired her husband: "Am sick over happenings in Germany. Many friends . . . newly imprisoned." She begged him in a letter to write "a new anti-Nazi play." By then Rainer had brought her two brothers to America, but, she recalled, "my father was impossible" and for months he refused to move to Brussels.

Earlier, in 1937, Albert Einstein had received Rainer and Odets at a rented cottage in Peconic, Long Island. Rainer asked him to help rescue European refugees. A famous photograph was taken of them in a rowboat on Long Island Sound. Rainer wore her trademark white pants. "He was very normal," she said of Einstein. "He played the violin and did not talk about the Theory of Relativity." Odets became so jealous as a result of Einstein's attention to Rainer that he later cut off the scientist's head in the photograph of them together.

Rainer and Odets lived in Greenwich Village, at One University Place. He insisted that she be a hausfrau, deferring to his need to write with music playing at full volume and keeping the refrigerator stocked with his favorite foods. She sometimes took refuge at the Waldorf or with friends. She confided in the photographer Alfred Stieglitz, who wrote her long romantic letters. The fights with Odets became more and more violent. Once, she said, "we were walking along Fifth Avenue, and he was screaming at me. We went into a taxi, and he was screaming. At one point the taxi stopped, and he got out of the taxi, and the driver looked at me and said, 'Get rid of that bastard.' "

In 1939, after two years of marriage, Rainer wrote her husband a sad farewell letter. "So many beautiful words had come all ready from you, so little had been done to realize them, and horrible words . . . and you didn't realize what you had said or done and were surprised or disturbed when I was broken into pieces."

When she left Odets, she told me, "he tried to kill himself. He went to Mexico and he ran into a tree! It was all crazy. . . . I just left! . . . Probably if he had said something, he would have said, 'Go!' "

In her London apartment, Rainer has a highly organized filing system. There are drawers full of meticulously preserved papers and a master list that reads "People Who Have Corresponded with Luise Rainer." These include Pearl Buck, Bertolt Brecht, Eleanora Duse, Chiang Kai-shek, George Gershwin, Lillian Hellman, Luchino Visconti, Vivien Leigh, Tennessee Williams, Lotte Lenya, and Alfred Stieglitz. In the rare interviews she has given over the past 60 years, Rainer spends most of the time describing a period that was over by the end of World War II, when she was only 35. A year after Odets's death, in 1963, she recalled him in her memoirs: "His lack of ever relying on anything but himself was the source of his restlessness and self-destruction."

While Odets was carrying on with Frances Farmer, Rainer fell in love with a British aristocrat. She stayed in England for a year and appeared in a West End production of a romantic comedy, *Behold the Bride.* Jealous and possessive, Odets broke off with Farmer in an attempt to win his wife back. When the Germans marched into Paris, Rainer learned that her father had been arrested in Brussels and sent to a camp as a political enemy of the Reich. Frantic, she approached William Bullitt, the U.S. ambassador to France, to pressure the State Department into rescuing him. Near death from starvation when he was released, Henry Rainer then had to cross the Pyrenees on foot. His arrival in New York was noted in the press. Luise was described as looking wan and exhausted, as if the complexities of her life had suddenly overwhelmed her. Rainer and Odets tried unsuccessfully to reconcile one more time after their divorce in 1940. Soon after that, Rainer discovered Odets with a young actress, Bette Grayson, whom he had met through Harold Clurman.

She made one more movie in Hollywood, for Paramount. The film was *Hostages,* a 1943 wartime melodrama, which she once told an interviewer had been such "a horrendous experience" that she had never seen it. She returned to New York to sell war bonds and then toured Europe for Mrs. Roosevelt. By then Mayer had blacklisted her. Rainer wanted the role of Maria in Sam Wood's *For W the Bell Tolls* opposite Gary Cooper she was never asked to audition, an part went to Ingrid Bergman. Be Brecht approached her and said, "I write a play for you." She suggeste adaptation of A. H. Klabund's novel *Chalk Circle.* She even went to a friend who was a producer and had bankroll the playwright. Months Brecht had written only two page what would ultimately become *The casian Chalk Circle,* one of his plays Chinese settings. Rainer recalls, "I him I thought his behavior was c geous!" To which Brecht replied, "A er actress would be on her knees to this part." Rainer said angrily, "I want anything more to do with you."

Near the end of the war, at a pa Manhattan, Rainer met a hand young Swiss publishing executive, R Knittel, who worked in New York. son of the wealthy Swiss novelist Knittel, Robert had wintered in Eg a child and shared Luise's love of and the cerebral life. "I am going to ry her," he said to a friend at the Then each morning on his way to he would push a love poem unde door at the Plaza. "He worshiped their daughter, Francesca Bowyer, Knittel was quietly uxorious. "Cli my passion. Robert was my home," ner says. By then Odets had ma Bette Grayson, with whom he would two children.

After their marriage in 1945, R and Knittel lived in a town house o ton Place and later in an 18th-ce farmhouse in North Stamford, Con cut. By 1956 she had moved to Lo where Knittel worked at the publ firm Jonathan Cape. He later becam editorial director at William Collin ter Knittel retired in 1979, the c moved to Vico Morcote, a village o Lugano in Switzerland, where H painted and worked on her memoir his death in 1989.

Back in London since 1992, Ra indefatigable—out four nights a wee a circle of friends that includes the Jill Robinson, daughter of pro director Dore Schary. "I have so energy," Rainer says, "it is fabulous travels often to New York and Los les to visit her daughter. Money has been an issue with her. "I never sp money on myself," she says. "I sur ed myself with beautiful things."

One afternoon after lunch, turns to me. "I am a little bit tire

"Come with me to my bedroom, e will both lie down. I will close es, and then you can continue the analysis." I follow her to her airy bedroom, which is filled with phohs of her daughter, Francesca, who bles Ali MacGraw, and her two ful granddaughters. One is married, ther attends Southern Methodist rsity in Dallas.

ner arranges herself on the pillows oses her eyes. "You may continue," ys softly. "What can it mean to be ist of your gifts and not have done s, meaningful work for the last 50 " I ask. Rainer suddenly leaps up bed and exclaims, "I am a great yes! . . . I would say it is my greatchievement to have come out of . . It would be a lie to say that I did ink much of myself! Because I t enough of myself. I would have o give out! . . . One wants to be the e can be, and I suppressed it!" Her ills the room, tears well in her eyes, r once there is no performance. "I ke a nun!" she says sadly. Later she It was me who withdrew. I got a tion that I did not want to work. did not counteract that."

asionally, in the dead of night, she uld cry to Robert about the loss career. From time to time there ffers, but Rainer's energies had ; she had grown tired of "the y and nonsense," as she called it. reated into the pleasures of a hapriage; she painted, made collages, ved beautifully in London, in a ouse in Eaton Mews. Rainer apoccasionally in the theater, in New n 1952 in *The Lady from the Sea* er in *The Little Foxes* in Vienna, e was often impatient and querue insisted on having her career on ms, however rarefied. In 1983 she the United States in a one-woman nance of Alfred Tennyson's 900em, "Enoch Arden." She refused promise, routinely taking refuge in ily life.

1958, when Federico Fellini was g *La Dolce Vita,* he approached and said, "I need your poetic He sent her an early script, which him was "absolutely terrible! . . . nsense!" She was to play a single pposite Marcello Mastroianni, a ck that could have revived her areer. Mastroianni plays a foolish , and Rainer would have none of insisted on rewriting their scene. that torrid summer in Rome, she and Fellini argued. "I love what you wrote," Fellini said, "but you must fuck Marcellc Mastroianni!" Rainer responded, "I want to go back home to my husband! I do not want to sweat my summer away! We must talk about my scene." They reached an impasse, and Rainer said she would do it her way or not at all. She recalls, "Fellini got down on his knees and said, 'You cannot leave!' and I said, 'Leave me alone!'" Later she sued the production company, holding up *La Dolce Vita*'s release until she was paid.

At the end of our interviews, I discovered an oddity. I was on the telephone with Francesca, and the subject of her mother's religion came up. "I did not know she was Jewish. Do you know something I don't know?" her daughter said lightly. Although she had read her mother's memoirs, she insisted that she had no idea her grandfather had been in a camp. "You did not know that your mother was listed as a prominent Jewish actress in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*?" I asked. "Really?" Francesca said. Later she said, "There were a lot of people who were in concentration camps who weren't Jewish."

I experienced a similar moment when I interviewed one of Rainer's closest friends of 40 years, Ingeborg ten Haeff, an artist who lives in New York. "I didn't know," she said when speaking of Luise's Jewish heritage.

Two days later, Rainer called me from London. "Why are you tormenting Francesca?" she asked playfully. "I've been thinking about your obsession. It's mad, racist. It's just as racist as how Hitler felt about being Aryan. I personally do not believe in religion. It's a man-made formula." I asked Rainer to explain this conundrum: How can she be so candid about her life that she appears in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica,* yet with her daughter and her close friend she leaves out key facts? During our talks, Rainer had alluded to a drama that undercut her marriage to Robert Knittel, but had dismissed it with, "Once again, it is a big story." On the telephone she chose again to be vague, saying, "Why should I burden my child?"

She finally explained. Before meeting her, Robert Knittel had attended Oxford and the University of Virginia. He was eager to volunteer for the Royal Air Force, but as a Swiss citizen he was not legally allowed to join. Knittel's parents remained in Switzerland during the war, and when Robert and Luise got married, he phoned to tell them the news. His mother responded negatively in a letter: "We read about Luise Rainer, and if she had to leave Austria for political reasons, it would be the death of your father." The euphemism "political reasons" clearly implied Rainer's Jewish heritage. Although Rainer had been reared in a family that used the word "Jewish" in whispers, she was outraged at this insult. To her horror, she came to realize that her in-laws were Nazi sympathizers. The hostility was palpable. "One day I was taking a bath, and my mother-in-law walked in and saw me naked," Rainer told me. "She said, 'The family has different breasts from you.'"

"When Francesca was 10 weeks old, Robert, the nurse, and I and the baby left for Switzerland to visit," she told me. "My nurse came to me one day and said, 'Mrs. Knittel, I was walking behind your mother-in-law and I heard her say to your father-in-law, 'Luise thinks you are a Nazi.' It was like suddenly being at Berchtesgaden, in Hitler's country retreat." However ambivalent she may have been about her own background, she now told Robert that she wanted a divorce. "I cannot come between the man I love and his family," she told him.

She moved into the Savoy in London. "Robert was miserable," she said. They soon reconciled, but Rainer did not see her mother-in-law until shortly before she died. When news of John Knittel's sympathies leaked out after the war, his popularity as a writer waned in Switzerland. Rainer's mother-in-law asked her to appear with him at interviews. "I would not do it," Rainer said. However much she despised her husband's family, she made a decision: Francesca would be shielded at all costs. "I've written it all down for her, what really happened, and someday she will read it," Rainer told me.

On our last afternoon together, Rainer returned the conversation to the essential fact of her life. "Look, darling, I'll tell you something. As you look around at other actresses who are [still] working now, are any as healthy as I am?" She stood and made a tiny bow. "And, darling, look at me!"

From Africa, Rainer sent me a joyous postcard describing a night she had spent in the bush under the stars, after a long train ride from Cape Town to Victoria Falls. Back in London, she telephoned and, her voice brimming, read me a description of her trip. "The horizon so very far, the sky unending, floating clouds, higher, higher, more voluminous than I have ever seen . . . no artifice." She hesitated. "Darling love, you just don't know the beauty of it." □

Credits

Fashion

Cover: See credits for pages 106–22.

Page 60: Bottom, **Jack Nicholson's** Barneys New York Collection sweater from Barneys New York, Beverly Hills.

Page 76: Marie Brenner styled by Jennifer Lee. Peter Biskind styled by Beth Blake; blazer by Agnès B. Homme, from Agnès B. Homme, N.Y.C.; T-shirt by Paul Smith, from Paul Smith, N.Y.C.

Page 90: Sheila Weller styled by Lara Bonomo; sweater by Calvin Klein, from selected Macy's stores.

Page 94: Tom Dardis styled by Beverly Hyde; turtleneck by Paul Smith, from Paul Smith, N.Y.C.

Pages 106–22: All Sulka shirts, waistcoats, and bow ties from Sulka stores nationwide; all Jay Kos socks from Jay Kos, N.Y.C.; all Prada shoes from Prada stores nationwide; all Asprey studs and cuff links from Asprey, N.Y.C.

Page 106: Joaquin Phoenix's, Vince Vaughn's, and **Djimon Hounsou's** Donna Karan jackets and pants from selected Saks Fifth Avenue stores. **Natalie Portman's** Jean Paul Gaultier top and skirt from Bergdorf Goodman, N.Y.C.; Stephen Russell diamond earrings from Stephen Russell, N.Y.C.

Page 118: Cate Blanchett's Pamela Dennis dress from Neiman Marcus, Houston; Manolo Blahnik shoes from Manolo Blahnik, N.Y.C. **Tobey Maguire's** Ralph Lauren jacket and pants from Polo Ralph Lauren, N.Y.C. **Claire Forlani's** John Galliano dress from Bergdorf Goodman, N.Y.C

Page 122: Gretchen Mol's Tomasz Starzewski dress from Saks Fifth Avenue, N.Y.C.; Manolo Blahnik shoes from Manolo Blahnik, N.Y.C. **Christina Ricci's** Dolce & Gabbana dress and coat from Dolce & Gabbana, N.Y.C. **Edward Furlong's** Ralph Lauren jacket and pants from Polo Ralph Lauren, N.Y.C.; Sulka shoes from Sulka, N.Y.C. **Rufus Sewell's** Donna Karan jacket and pants from selected Saks Fifth Avenue stores.

Page 188: Larry Quirk's Banana Republic sweater from Banana Republic stores nationwide; Kim Debus for Jam Arts.

Page 208: Jane Powell's Giorgio Armani suit from Giorgio Armani, Beverly Hills; **June Allyson's** Harry Winston jewelry from Harry Winston, Beverly Hills; **Ann Miller's** and **Cyd Charisse's** St. John Knit suits and **Gloria DeHaven's** St. John Knit top and skirt from the St. John boutique, Beverly Hills; Daniel Caudill for Visages Style.

Page 258: Wardrobe by Nathalie Cercueil, Patricia Colin, and Germinal Rangel; set dressing by Aline Bonetto.

Page 289: Brad Renfro's Helmut Lang sweater from Saks Fifth Avenue stores nationwide; Helmut Lang Jeans jacket from Helmut Lang, N.Y.C.; Cheap Jack's hat from Cheap Jack's, N.Y.C

Page 304: Casper Van Dien styled by Sanaa Djellal; shirt and pants by Paul Smith, from Paul Smith, N.Y.C

Pages 314–15: Jack Nicholson's Barneys New York Collection sweater from Barneys New York, Beverly Hills

Pages 316–17: Kate Winslet's Morgane Le Fay dress from Morgane Le Fay, N.Y.C

Page 320: Robert Duvall's J. Crew sweater from J. Crew stores nationwide; L'Wren Scott for Vernon Jolly Inc.

Page 321: Robin Williams's Wilkes Bashford tie from Wilkes Bashford, San Francisco; L'Wren Scott for Vernon Jolly Inc.

Page 323: Anne Christensen for Art & Commerce.

Pages 324–25: Sigourney Weaver's Queentex body stocking from Patricia Fields, N.Y.C.; for Hanro briefs, call 800-889-7443; Early Halloween boots from Early Halloween, N.Y.C.

Pages 330–31: Pam Grier's Gucci tank top from Gucci, Beverly Hills.

Page 332: James Ivory's Giorgio Armani V-necked sweater from Giorgio Armani Boutiques nationwide; Donna Karan coat from Donna Karan Collection at Bergdorf Goodman, N.Y.C.; Sulka belt from Sulka stores nationwide; Ralph Lauren Footwear shoes from Ralph Lauren, N.Y.C. **Ismail Merchant's** N. Peal turtleneck from N. Peal, San Francisco; Brioni coat from Brioni stores, N.Y.C.; Bruno Magli shoes from Bruno Magli stores nationwide.

Page 333: Joan Cusack's Trina Turk sweater and Saks Fifth Avenue Private Label tank top, both from Saks Fifth Avenue, Beverly Hills; **John Cusack's** Gucci shirt and jacket from Gucci, Beverly Hills; Daniel Caudill for Visages Style

Page 334: Kevin Kline's Donna Karan sweater and overcoat from selected Saks Fifth Avenue stores; Paul Smith jacket from Barneys New York, N.Y.C.; Ralph Lauren boots from Polo Ralph Lauren, N.Y.C.

Pages 336–37: Chris Tucker's Calvin Klein Underwear top from Bloomingdale's stores nationwide; Versus pants, Versace belt, and Mossimo sunglasses, all from Barneys New York, Beverly Hills; Tommy Hilfiger boots from Tommy Hilfiger, Beverly Hills. **Chris Rock's** PS Paul Smith suit from Paul Smith, N.Y.C.; Alexander McQueen shirt and Barneys New York Collection shoes, both from Barneys New York, Beverly Hills.

Pages 338–39: Wes Craven's Giorgio Armani tie, shirt, and jacket from Giorgio Armani, Beverly Hills.

Page 341: Kim Basinger's Worth dress from Patricia Pastor, N.Y.C., by appointment only.

Page 342: Eva Marie Saint's Mikimoto pearl-and-diamond brooch and bracelet, and pearl earrings, all from Mikimoto, Costa Mesa, Calif.; for **Tippi Hedren's** Jean Schlumberger exclusively for Tiffany & Co. diamond-and-sapphire earrings, call 800-423-2394; **Suzanne Pleshette's** Mikimoto pearl necklace and pearl-and-diamond earrings, all from Mikimoto, N.Y.C.; for **Janet Leigh's** Tiffany & Co. diamond-and-platinum earrings, call 800-423-2394.

Page 345: Gucci shirt from Gucci, L.A.; Levi's pants from American Rag, L.A.; L'Wren Scott for Vernon Jolly Inc.

Page 347: Joan Allen's Jil Sander coat from Barneys New York, N.Y.C

Pages 348–49: Helena Bonham Carter's John Rocha dress from Louis, Boston

Page 353: Peter Fonda's Levi's jacket from What Comes Around Goes Around, N.Y.C.

Page 354: Daniel Caudill for Visages Style.

Page 355: L'Wren Scott for Vernon Jolly Inc.

Beauty and Grooming

Cover: See credits for pages 106–22.

Page 60: Bottom, Tracy Moyer for Célestine

Page 76: Marie Brenner's hair and makeup by Assumpta Clohessy for Price, Inc.; Peter Biskind's grooming by Gita Bass for Price, Inc.

Page 90: Sheila Weller's hair and makeup by Maria Verel for Art & Commerce.

Page 94: Tom Dardis's grooming by Mally Roncal for Makeup for Ever

Pages 106–22: Hair and grooming by John Caruso for 78 Grand Street, Frédéric Fekkai for Frédéric Fekkai Beauté, Sally Hershberger for Profile, and Guy Laurent for Atlantis. Makeup by James Kaliardos for the Agency, Jeanine Lobell for Stila, Denise Markey for Club Monaco Cosmetics, and Moyra Mulholland for the Clive Salon. Manicures by Deborah Lippmann for the John Barrett S

Page 106: Natalie Portman's hair styled wi Heat, humidity-resistant styling spray, from Paul ell. All makeup from Elizabeth Arden. On her Eyeshadow in Teak; on her lips, Exceptional Li in Shimmer. **Joaquin Phoenix's** and **Vince Vau** hair styled with products from Clinique Skin Su for Men.

Page 118: Cate Blanchett's hair styled wit bastian's Get It Straitt from Laminates. All m from Clarins. On her eyes, New Soft Shimme Colour in Vanilla Pearl; on her lips, New Secr Brillant Sheer Shimmer Lipstick in Copper Shi **Tobey Maguire's** hair styled with products Ralph Lauren Polo Sport. **Claire Forlani's** styled with Matrix Essentials Vital Nutrients Fusion Spray Gel. All makeup from Christian Di her eyes, Solo Dior Single Eyeshadow in Sr Grey, No. 065, and Clear Beige, No. 715; lips, Diorific Lipstick in Mystic Mauve, No. 008

Page 122: Gretchen Mol's hair styled wit gins' Take Control styling gel. All makeup from Lauder. On her eyes, Two-in-One Eyeshadow Dry Formula in Eggshell; on her lips, Perfect L in Dawn **Christina Ricci's** hair styled with Mitchell Soft Spray. All makeup from Lancôm her eyes, Maquiriche CremePowder EyeColou in Bleu Vapeur and Platinum; on her lips, Absolu Hydrating Long Lasting LipColour in **Edward Furlong's** hair styled with products Ralph Lauren Polo Sport.

Page 188: Larry Quirk's grooming by Assu Clohessy for Price, Inc.

Pages 200 and 204: Mike Myers's wig by Judi Cooper-Sealy; wig made by Stewart stall and Donna Gliddon; on-set hair by Je O'Hallorhan; prosthetics design by Matthew gle; prosthetics application and makeup by Jackson. **Neve Campbell's, Salma Hayek's, Myers's, Ryan Phillippe's,** and **Sela Ward's** design by Judi Cooper-Sealy; makeup desi Patricia Green; on-set hair and makeup assis by Kelly Baker.

Page 208: Brad Bowman for Heller Artists; Howell and Edward St. George, both for Cl Bethany Karlyn for Trish McEvoy at Heller Natalie Miller for Cloutier/Trish McEvoy; Sylv for Cloutier.

Page 258: Hair by Diane Duroc and Diane moudi; makeup by Dominique Galichet, Beya and Nathalie Tissier.

Page 289: Brad Renfro's grooming by DeCock for Cemal Inc.; grooming product Ralph Lauren Polo Sport.

Page 304: Casper Van Dien's groom Louise Wittlich for Corps et Âme

Pages 314–15: Jack Nicholson's groom Tracy Moyer for Célestine.

Pages 316–17: Dan Sharp for Garren Ne at Henri Bendel; James Kaliardos for the Age

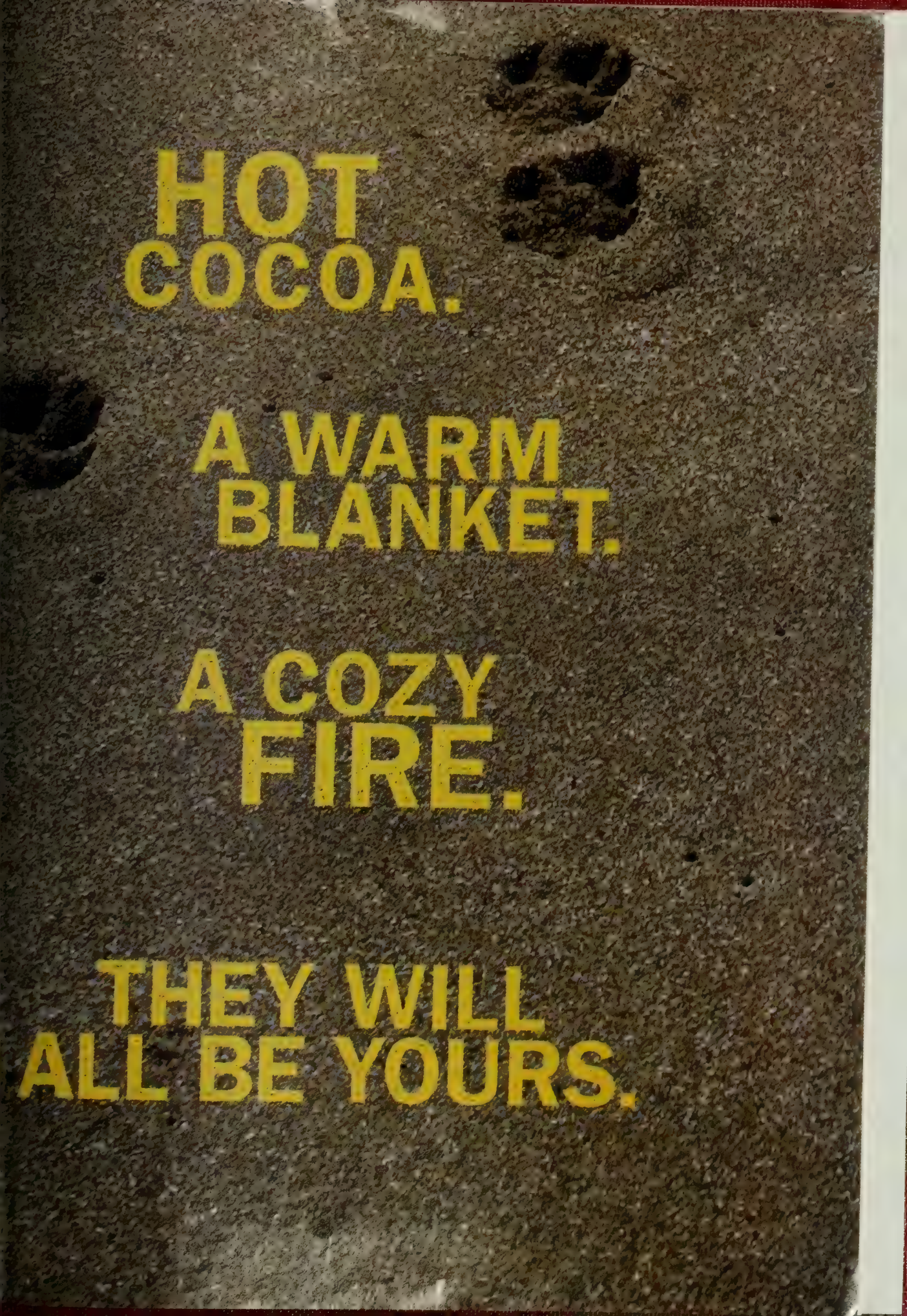
Pages 318–19: Brian Helgeland's, Curti son's, and **James Ellroy's** grooming by Tracy er for Célestine

Page 320: Robert Duvall's grooming by J tell for Jo Strettell Makeup.

Page 322: Helen Hunt's hair styled with A Phomolliant. All makeup from Estée Lauder. eyes, Two-in-One Eyeshadow Duo Wet/D mula in Linen; on her lips, Perfect Sheer Lip Pink Shimmer. Darrell Redleaf-Fielder for C Denise Markey for the Stephen Knoll Salor

Page 323: Matt Damon's hair by Thom for Garren New York; grooming by Racine tensen for Sarah Laird.

CONTINUED ON PA


HOT
COCOA.
A WARM
BLANKET.
A COZY
FIRE.
THEY WILL
ALL BE YOURS.

Credits

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Page 332: James Ivory's and **Ismail Merchant's** grooming by Assumpta Clohessy for Price, Inc.
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Page 334: Kevin Kline's hair by Thom Priano for Garren New York at Henri Bendel; grooming by Susan Sterling for Marek & Associates.
Pages 336–37: Chris Tucker's and **Chris Rock's** grooming by Rea Ann Silva for Visages Style and by Scott Julion.
Pages 338–39: Wes Craven's grooming by Sylvia Viau for Cloutier.
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Pages 314–15: Production by Stardust Vis
Pages 318–19: Production by Stardust Vis
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Vanity Fair № 452 (ISSN 0733-8899). The magazine is published monthly by The Condé Nast Publications Inc., Condé Nast Building, 350 Madison Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10017. Steven T. Florio, President and Chief Executive Officer; David B. Chemidlin, Treasurer; Jill Henderson, Secretary. Periodicals postage paid at N.Y., N.Y. 10001, and at additional mailing of Authorized as International Publications Mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash. Sales Agreement No. 33332. Subscriptions: In the United Stat and its possessions, $18 for one year, $34 for two years. In Canada, $32 for one year, including GST and HST where applicable. Registration No. 123242885. Elsewhere, $37, payable in adv. Single copies: $3.50 in the United States, $4.00 in Canada. For subscriptions, address changes, and adjustments, write to *Vanity Fair*, Box 53516, Boulder, Colo. 80328-3516. The first copy of a new subscription will be mailed within eight weeks of receipt of order. Eight weeks is required for change of address, please give both new address and old as printed on last label. Address all editorial, production, and business correspondence to *Vanity Fair*, 350 Madison Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10017.
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WHEN HE'S
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What do you feed the
head of the household?
Only the best.
Cesar
Select Dinners
For Small Dogs
For someone
special.

Planetarium

Michael Lutin advises Aries to try a little tenderness

ARIES ♈ MARCH 21–APRIL 19

A typical Aries was recently heard shouting in the office, "Out of my way! I'm coming through. Don't mess with me, because I'm in no mood to roll over. Try to stop me and—no offense—I'll flatten you like a pancake." Since Mars, the planetary ruler of Aries, is conjoining Saturn in your sign these days, such a self-assertive outburst should come as no surprise. Although nothing will dampen your manic determination to achieve the impossible, a simultaneous show of loving-kindness from Jupiter in Pisces could soften your affect considerably.

TAURUS ♉ APRIL 20–MAY 20

Oh, the existential angst that comes with a Mars-Saturn conjunction in your 12th house! That's what is causing you to bite your lip and grind your teeth at night. Luckily, though, Jupiter in your 11th house will provide you with spiritually minded friends who won't let you indulge in too much self-flagellation. No matter how hard they try, though, it may be difficult for you to accept their support or encouragement. And it won't be any easier for you to silence that inner voice that murmurs so cruelly, "If they only knew."

GEMINI ♊ MAY 21–JUNE 21

Talk about too little too late. After the way you've been kicked around and whacked back and forth like a Wiffle Ball, suddenly the very people who had the moxie to insult you and unload you like a hot potato are dying just to have the chance to butter you up. Jupiter in your midheaven is opening up wonderful career opportunities, but get real. How can you let yourself turn gooey for anything or anyone right now if the price for such adulation is a long-term commitment, which you are in absolutely no shape to make?

CANCER ♋ JUNE 22–JULY 22

If you believe that God, the universe, and the Force are watching out for you (and with Jupiter in your 9th house that's almost certainly what you *do* believe), public scrutiny can never disturb you, so let your critics examine your comings and goings. Jupiter should also help to protect you from controlling and unscrupulous individuals who may be out to get you. Be honest, though. If you are playing the same game they are, even a visit to the ruins at Machu Picchu and an offering to the gods won't help all that much.

LEO ♌ JULY 23–AUG. 22

At times your fantasies have led you into areas where nice people don't go, so by now you know how dangerous dreams can be. If it weren't for illusions, though, there would be no candlelight dinners or romance of any kind. People wouldn't fall in love, and heaven only knows how babies would get born. As the ruler of your 5th house enters your 8th, maybe it won't be a federal offense if you indulge a little. A note of caution, however: that annoying little guide, Jiminy Cricket, will be right beside you whispering in your ear.

VIRGO ♍ AUG. 23–SEPT. 22

Even if financial deals seem almost impossible to tie up these days, business-minded Virgos are steaming full ahead, gathering support for their latest projects. No matter how unceremoniously you got dissed last year, now that Jupiter is in your 7th house you are feeling secure again. If you've been praying for a caring mate, this is the time one could drop right onto your living-room rug. Your sex life is still not exactly right, though, because, with Saturn in your 8th house, timing and preference are likely to interfere with your dreams of perfection.

LIBRA ♎ SEPT. 23–OCT. 23

A solar eclipse in your 6th house promises a whole new positive w cycle, provided you are not one of those Libras who coast along childish notions of false entitlement. And while that may sound an unduly harsh statement, you should be aware that a Mars-Sat conjunction *always* invites wicked criticism from a cold, unyielc world. The people toughest on you are forcing you to act in a ma and productive way that could actually save your butt in the long So, please, no whining about injustice. This *is* justice.

SCORPIO ♏ OCT. 24–NOV. 21

Work. Health. Love. Does anybody ever think about anything else? three are certainly at the top of every *Scorpio's* list these days, e cially the first. We all know how hard you're working. You don't h to wave your sweat-soaked bandanna around to prove it. With M conjunct Saturn in your 6th house, you're exhibiting all the stamin a Trojan. Don't forget about your heart, though. If you're fertile up for it, start painting the nursery. If you've already got kids, the not creating any crises right now. And the love thing? Yes, definit

SAGITTARIUS ♐ NOV. 22–DEC. 21

Your family has not been exactly a bastion of moral support over past year, but you and many other Sadges have been pretending everything was peachy at home. It wasn't. A coming solar eclips your 4th house should usher in genuine positive feelings toward y loved ones. It also signals a year of expansion, possibly even a m While you may feel closer to your family, you are still trying tc more independent, in an effort to break the spell of depression feel looming over you. It's Pluto, and it's going to take time.

CAPRICORN ♑ DEC. 22–JAN. 19

No matter how often astrologers tell us that a new moon with Ju brings good luck, the average Capricorn will read this forecast a more than a futile attempt to mask the *real* news. Capricorns ge ally tend to accept only bad news as real news. While there are jor crises occurring in your family that will have you coming and g like crazy, the fortunate aspect of the solar eclipse taking place in 3rd house could—with a healthy change of attitude on your part—s most of your problems. If you can accept this, that is *real* news.

AQUARIUS ♒ JAN. 20–FEB. 18

When your horoscope predicts that money will flow in and pros ty will be yours, you treat it about as seriously as you would a tune cookie. But that is what you can expect to hear now that Ju is passing through your 2nd house. With so many things going w in your mind and body, money doesn't seem to matter much. Isn't the kicker, though? The minute you get over your fear of losing it, don't have to give it away. P.S. Though screaming is not your sty might just help you breathe better. But drive carefully.

PISCES ♓ FEB. 19–MARCH 20

Only a Pisces can feel smaller than an ant one minute and bigger life the next. The recent transit of the south node through your has been productive for many Pisceans, but destructive for o Many of you have felt lousy and unresponsive. If people compli ed you, you lost respect for them. All you wanted to do was you didn't need anybody. Now comes the reward for all your cont Jupiter in Pisces. It's a blessing. A miracle. Perform a *mitzvah* And if you don't know what a *mitzvah* is, call a rabbi immediat

To hear Michael Lutin read your weekly horoscope, call 1-900-28V-FAIR on a Touch-Tone phone. Cost: $1.95 per minute. If you are under 18, you need parental permission.


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Proust Questionnaire



Shelley Winters

With nearly 100 films to her credit Shelley Winters has gone beyond the status of long-running actress to Hollywood legend. Now, at 75, Winters reflects on her career, and reveals that after 50 years on-screen she aspires to be an opera star

What is your idea of perfect happiness?
All's right with the world.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
Acting for 50 years.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?
Dieting.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?
Eleanor Roosevelt and Eleonora Duse.

Which living person do you most admire?
Betty Friedan.

What is your greatest extravagance?
I'm not extravagant. I'm generous.

What do you dislike most about your appearance?
My age.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?
"Just a moment."

What is your greatest regret?
That I did not stay on the stage in New York longer.

What or who is the greatest love of your life?
My second husband.

When and where were you happiest?
When my daughter was born.

What is your favorite journey?
The one that leads me to my grandchildren.

What is your most treasured possession?
I don't treasure possessions.

What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?
Depression.

What is your favorite occupation?
Teaching.

What is your most marked characteristic?
Sense of humor, I hope.

What do you most value in your friends?
Compassion.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
Heidi.

Who are your heroes in real life?
F.D.R.

What is it that you most dislike?
Pepper.

How would you like to die?
In my sleep.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?
Female Einstein.

If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?
Opera singer.

What is your motto?
"I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul."

In a past life I was a
ermaid who fell in love
th an ancient mariner. I
led him into the sea to be
husband. I didn't know he
ouldn't breathe underwater.



e i was a court jester.
hated that damn hat.



In a past life I was pure, glacial spring water.



nlandia's pure taste responsibly.



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